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FROM
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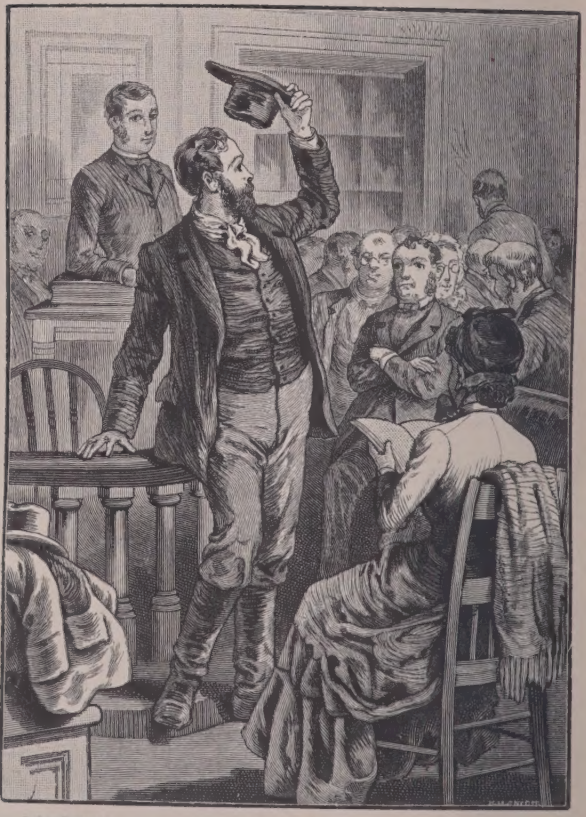

Spicy Breezes.

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FROM

MINNESOTA PRAIRIES.

BY

BOSTON W. SMITH,

("UNCLE BOSTON.")

PHILADELPHIA:

American Baptist Publication Society,

1420 Chestnut Street.

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AN EXPLANATORY BREEZE.

The author hopes the readers of this work may find features that shall interest them in Christian work in Western fields.

The *missionary features* of the book are founded upon experiences occurring during the five years' work of the author as Sunday-school Missionary for the American Baptist Publication Society.

The home "missionary sketches" are given, that readers may catch a glimpse of experiences coming into the lives of some who go to preach the gospel to every creature in the Western fields of America.

The book is written at the suggestion of numerous pastors, superintendents, and teachers, who have felt

the need of more books aiming to interest readers in the work of missions in the home field.

Finally, this volume is not named by the author. One who has taken a kindly interest in the missionary's work has suggested the title, because of the variety of incidents, experiences, and suggestions found in its pages.

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SPRING ZEPHYRS.

HELPING A WESTERN CHURCH.

THE bluebirds and robins had begun the first strains of their annual anthem among the trees about the missionary's home. The pure, fresh air of spring was so sweet, that one felt impelled to take great lungfuls at every breath. Never could a morning have afforded greater inducements for a missionary trip over the prairies of Minnesota. After a two hours' ride over the iron rail, the name of the little station nearest the prairie village was called out. A farm wagon was our next means of locomotion. The steady going team jogged along for two hours over the prairie; every moment of the ride was highly enjoyable. Calling from house to house, the missionary picked up the incidents and notes on which this chapter is constructed.

Twelve years before, the pastor of a Baptist church in Massachusetts, had received and accepted the call to become the under shepherd of the Baptist flock in

this prairie town in Minnesota. It was a hard field in which to work; and frontier pastoral life was a new experience. His own words were: "I received more kicks than coppers." He held on, however, with true Yankee persistence; and, at the end of two years, a beautiful little chapel was built and paid for, and a small, but thriving, Baptist church worshiped therein. Only a few years passed, when dissensions crept into the membership, separations succeeded, and soon the empty pews outnumbered the congregation. The remaining few of the flock were scattered; the chapel was closed, and the preaching of the gospel within its walls became a past event. From that time its doors were only opened by passing emigrants, who made it a stopping place in which to camp over night. The floors soon creaked with the tread of the tramp; and this came to be the only class seen in the chapel, where so short a time before classes of children gathered every Sunday for the study of God's word. The pastor pre-empted a claim in the neighborhood, and began sowing seed for a temporal harvest, while the Wicked One sowed bountifully for a harvest of tares.

During these days of declension, there still lived

one Baptist mother in Israel—her heart bowed down with sorrow that the chapel should be thus vacated. The sad desecration of the Lord's Day became unendurable. She succeeded in gaining the consent of the school board to use the school-house in which to hold a Sunday-school, and at once wrote to the American Baptist Publication Society, the Sunday-school's own Society. A donation of Bibles and papers was made, the school organized, and old "Mother C." chosen superintendent. Though compelled to walk more than a mile to the school-house, she was found in her place every Sunday, regardless of wind or rain, heat or cold. This example of faithfulness was not without its reward.

A year before, two young men from one of the older States opened business in B. Both in early life had been educated in the Sunday-school, but had not become Christians. They were not accustomed to see a church of any description so desecrated and abused as the one they found, with its doors broken open, and scarcely a whole light of glass in its windows. One of the young men resolved upon putting an end to such desecration and waste of church property, and immediately boarded up the windows and padlocked

the door. But the next morning he found the lock broken off, and the door opened by one who had made the chapel his lodging place for months. The young man's resolution was finally put into execution, and no one but himself could find entrance to the deserted church edifice.

These young business men had heard of Mother C.'s faithfulness to the little church of which she had been a constituent member; and seeing her weekly exhibition of fidelity caused them to inquire what they could do to help along the little interest still remaining.

As they talked over matters and things in their familiar way, the wife of one of them—who was not a Christian—proposed that a sociable be given at their house—the largest, perhaps, in the county—and an invitation sent to everybody for miles around, hoping to interest the neighborhood in sustaining church services. Preparations were made for the sociable; the evening arrived and the hour; but not a neighbor appeared. Nine o'clock was struck, and still no one came; half-past nine, and not a soul had come. Was the sociable to be a failure? Would no one come to the feast? Indications seemed to affirm

the facts implied in the questions. Nothing remained for the household to do but to retire for the night, with a feeling that their lot had fallen to them among the heathen. But at a quarter to ten a team was heard at the gate, and the former pastor of the church was greeted at the door with his family. At ten o'clock *sixty-three* persons were in the house to attend the sociable. They had come six, eight, ten, and twelve miles. The family at whose house the gathering was held, made all welcome, and exerted their social powers to their utmost. After partaking of the bountiful supply of good things, the party were in gleeful spirits. At this point, one of the young men stated the reason for giving the sociable, as follows:

"We may not all be church members; but, whether we are or not, we ought not to be willing to see any church building so completely demolished as is the little Baptist chapel in our town. And now I propose that we, as young people, form a society and raise money to put this Baptist chapel in repair; and we will now take the names of all who will join our society. *The admission fee will be fifty cents for gentlemen, and twenty-five cents for ladies;* and I believe

we can get Elder S.—pointing to the ex-pastor—to resume preaching service on Sunday in the chapel, if we can raise money enough to put it in decent condition.

Forty names were immediately given, and an outside society formed to raise a "Church Edifice Fund" for the Baptist Church in B.—no other denomination ever having organized in the place. The society resolved upon giving a series of dances, strawberry festivals, oyster suppers, and neck-tie parties. Thus they began their "labor of love" for the benefit of a dead Baptist church. The first dance was given; and Elder S.—not being a dancing Baptist—entered his protest, and, with one consent, the Society voted "*dances out of order in raising funds for a Baptist meeting-house.*" The suppers and festivals, however, were held, and proved very remunerative.

Soon the floor of the chapel was cleaned with hoe and shovel, and scrubbed diligently by the young people; the windows were repaired; the pews washed and repainted; a new Bible and cushion found their way to the pulpit desk; an easy-chair was placed upon the pulpit platform; the windows were cleaned and curtained; a ninety-dollar organ was purchased

and placed in position; and the next proposition was to enclose the church lot with a neat fence, set out shade trees around the chapel, and paint the outside of the building. Preaching service was then resumed on Sunday, the Sunday-school removed to its former place, and the prayer-meeting evening was observed by social gatherings.

One of their sociables was held the first night of the missionary's stay in the neighborhood. The literary efforts of the members of the Society were published in their "Budget," a paper edited "in the interests of a band of young people, formed for mutual improvement of each other, and the Baptist Meeting-House." It was indeed a queer collection of "brevities and oddities."

The Society asked the missionary to "indulge in a few remarks," which he did. At their conclusion, an incident occurred worthy of notice. This Society was eminently Home Mission in its endeavors; and the speaker desired, if possible, to arouse in these people an interest in outside or foreign missions, and therefore suggested "The Helping Hand" as an excellent paper for them to introduce into their meetings once a month. As the speaker finished his remarks,

Jim S., a real specimen of Western frontier manhood, stepped up to the desk, and said:

"I'd jest like to hear the name of that paper you told us of agin."

Receiving the desired information, he turned to the audience, swung his hat around his head to gain additional attention to that already given him, and said:

"By the Jumping Jingo, I want to say now: We're going to have 'The Helping Hand' in this here Society; and you kin jest git yer wallets outen yer pockits, 'cause Jim's goin' to take the collection this time, and he won't take any of yer squealin', 'cause he wants sumthin' more substanshul."

A collection of six dollars was taken. They voted the surplus to the purchase of singing books. It was announced that the Sunday-school missionary would remain over Sunday.

Meetings were held the two intervening evenings. The chapel was filled to its utmost at each service. A more attentive and interested congregation never greeted a public speaker than did this one, as "the old, old story" was told for their benefit. Many were inquiring, "What must we do to be saved?"

At the close of the second meeting, Jim S. came forward for a few words with the missionary. He dropped all his frontier slang, and, with tearful eyes and trembling speech, said:

"It was not always this way with me. I left my Eastern home five years ago, not letting my parents know anything of my whereabouts. I once lived a consistent Christian life; but evil companions, and associations in the West, have led me astray. My uncle is one of the leading Baptist ministers in the East. Your talks the past two evenings make me feel that I ought to come back to my Father's house, and live as I know I ought to. I want you to pray for me."

The next time Jim spoke in meeting, it was in such a changed manner that his old companions knew not how to understand it. He at once took up his religious obligations.

Sunday morning the chapel could not contain the people who came to hear the gospel preached; aisles, windows, and doors were packed full of eager listeners.

At the Sunday-school session, Mother C. resigned her position, and named Jim S. as her successor.

He said he had long felt ashamed of himself for allowing Mother C. to carry on the only service of a religious character held in their community; and if, at the end of the year, the school felt that he should relieve the aged sister of the responsibility, he would cheerfully assume the duties of Sunday-school superintendent.

The school was sadly in need of a new library, which the missionary promised to aid in securing. A donation from our Publication Society was secured. Among the books given were "Theodosia Ernest" and "Grace Truman."

The evening service found the chapel crowded an hour before the time announced, many being turned away for lack of accommodations. The Spirit's power was manifested, and many were deeply convicted of sin. This field was in truth "white unto the harvest." The missionary longed to remain, as he was so urgently invited by the people; but appointments had been made for the week following, which must be met.

In conversation with Jim S., the painful truth was learned, that the Elder who had been the former pastor did not bear the best reputation for honesty

and fair dealing, and that, in consequence, very few ever came to hear him preach. If only a good man could be sent upon the field by the Home Mission Society, there was every reason to believe a strong church could be built up.

Application was at once made; but an overburdened treasury rendered the appointment out of the question; and so the sheaves lay ungathered, though the occasional visit of the Sunday-school missionary revealed an abiding interest in religious things on the part of the young people of the neighborhood.

The following winter, Jim S. became the very efficient superintendent, which office he filled acceptably for two years. He longed to see the little Baptist church reorganized; but his hopes were not to be realized.

A minister of another denomination, learning that there was no Baptist preaching in the little town—for the former pastor had lost all his congregation—he at once sought and obtained permission to hold regular services in the Baptist chapel. The Lord blessed his labors, and some thirty or forty of the young people were converted. He then organized a branch of the church over which he was pastor; but when he came

to the baptism of the young people, not one of them would consent to give their names until the minister had taken them to the river and *immersed* them after the Bible manner. They also told him that, if ever a Baptist church was organized, they should at once apply for membership, for they were Baptists in principle. So again, as many times before, "Theodosia Ernest" and "Grace Truman" had led many young people to the Scriptures as the only safe guide.

Jim S. became homesick for church privileges; and as a Baptist church home in that vicinity could not be hoped for, he sold his farm, and, with his wife and family, removed to the East, where he can confirm the incidents here recorded in "helping a Western church."

HEARING FOR OTHERS.

"OUR pastor is going to the State Convention," said a good sister, whose heart was on fire for missions. "And when he returns, he will inspire our church to renewed interest in the subject of evangelizing the world; for it is little understood by many of our church members."

This information was given by the sister referred to, a few weeks before the annual gathering of the Baptist hosts of the State.

The busy housekeeper left the missionary perusing the missionary magazine for that month. Not finding his attention fixed upon the latest from the field, he closed the book, and thought of two persons who visited the World's Exposition.

One was a man of business, whose mind was so occupied with his great mercantile establishment, that he could spare but a single day for all the various departments. Upon his return, he spent an evening at

a social gathering, and was questioned concerning the wonders exhibited. One after another of his friends, who had, for various reasons, not visited the Exposition, asked:

"What did you see while there?"

"I saw a great deal," was his one answer.

"But *what* did you see?" they asked, and the same answer was given to the constantly repeated question.

This man had hurriedly passed through all the departments, and so his visit had resulted in no information for another being on the earth but himself.

The other visitor was a lady, who, with note book in hand, jotted down the most important things to be seen, and classified them. As she passed through the different sections, she saw some very noticeable things in which she knew some of her friends at home to be specially interested; these were noted in her memorandum book. Upon her return home, she also was questioned; and, upon learning what special department the questioner was interested in, would, with the aid of her note-book, entertain and instruct her many friends who were not favored with a visit to the Exposition. She thought of others than herself.

Just then our missionary lady sat down, having in

her lap some patchwork that she was making to send to a lady teacher among the Freedmen. The missionary related the incident of the two visitors to the Exposition, and asked her which she supposed her pastor would be like unto. A sudden cry from one of her numerous little family prevented her from giving the answer. Upon her return to the room, her first remark was:

"Our mission circle don't work as harmoniously as it ought, and——"

At that point in the conversation, the pastor of the church called to take the missionary out to see some sick folks belonging to his flock.

Next morning, as the train left the station, the pastor called:

"Good-bye. I hope to meet you at the State Convention next week."

Shortly after the Convention, the missionary stopped again at the little town where was located the little Baptist Church fed by the pastor who sought inspiration among his convened brethren.

The missionary sister and her good husband kept the Baptist hotel, where were entertained all Baptist workers who made occasional visits to the place.

Soon after being seated, the missionary ventured the question:

"Well, did your pastor tell you what a grand time we had at the State Convention?"

"Yes; and *that is just all he did tell us.* We were reminded of that man of whom you told us, 'who saw a great deal at the Exposition.' Evidently our pastor went to the Convention to hear for himself; for we haven't heard one thing that was said or done, although he persists in saying, '*It was a grand Convention.*'"

I offered some cold consolation by remarking:

"Well, he is not the only pastor, superintendent, or delegate sent to Conventions who never gives an account of the good things said and done."

"Do you know of *one* minister," the missionary sister asked, "who does any better than our pastor has done, on returning from Convention, Association, or other gathering?"

"Yes, there's Elder G., who, I think, has 'a more excellent way.' He ministers to a people among whom are busy men and housekeeping women. Not one of these could spare time from their busy lives to attend the Association last year. When the Associa-

tional clerk notified the church three weeks before the time of meeting, some paid no attention to the call, for they had no interest whatever in anything that would not yield them dollars and cents; the others, 'with one consent began to make excuse.' The pastor alone went to the Association.

"The Sunday following, instead of the usual sermon, he took into the pulpit his note-book, of which he had made liberal use during all the sessions of the Association. He gave them a brief outline of the opening sermon, referring kindly to the preacher's style and manner; he then spoke of the organization, and told who were elected officers and where they lived. Then followed a digest of the church letters, some of them telling of times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and others of discouragements and difficulties; some were struggling hard to erect a meeting-house; some of the churches had preaching but once a month. Thus, in a few minutes, the religious state of the churches in the Association was set forth to his people. The low state of their own church became apparent, when compared with thoroughly organized churches with only half the working force.

"He then told of the rousing Sunday-school meeting in the evening, giving the subjects discussed and the good points brought out. He expressed a heartfelt wish that every officer and teacher of their school could have heard the inspiring words; for suggestions had been made which would have wrought a vast improvement in their Bible studying service.

"He gave items of interest from the addresses by representative speakers for the Missionary Union, the Home Mission, and Publication Societies, and made special mention of the address on Ministerial Education. He then referred to Bro. McM.'s account of the Bible Convention at Saratoga, and explained to his uninformed hearers just what the Bible Question was, and what was decided at the wonderful meeting; for he had in his congregation many who knew there was such a thing as the Bible Question, but who had only the faintest idea of what it was, and others who were totally ignorant of the whole matter. He spoke of the Thank Offering for the Bible Work, and said it would be made in their church the following Sunday.

"Then followed an account of the Women's Missionary Meeting, in which all were deeply interested.

He also spoke of the deep devotional spirit pervading all the meetings for prayer and praise.

"In this way, the morning service was made so exceedingly interesting that all enjoyed it more than the ordinary morning sermon. The members of the church were not only interested for the hour, but immediately entered upon the year's work with greater earnestness, and with a willingness very cheering to the pastor.

"Next year Elder G. will not be the only delegate from his church; for if the listening to a mere outline of what was done can be so interesting, they are desirous of hearing all that is said and done."

"Now, that is the kind of a pastor to have; and I hope, before you leave town, you will not fail to tell our preacher of 'the more excellent way,'" said the missionary sister, as she hurried away to prepare a favorite dish of the hungry missionary, who that day was to dine in her house.

BASE BALL HELPS THE S. S. WORK.

"WE ought to have a good Sunday-school; but it is impossible to get the young people interested in anything that is good."

These were the desponding words of a much discouraged pastor.

The missionary arranged at the earliest possible date to spend a few days with the Elder. He lived in a Minnesota village noted for its wickedness. Several from that neighborhood were serving their sentences in the State prison; while a number of other citizens of the place ought also to have been behind the bars.

The fresh spring air blew over the prairies; and the clear shining of the sun, with roads out of which the frost had come, leaving them in excellent condition, made the ride from the railroad station to the village, sixteen miles away, a very delightful one.

But amid all the bright surroundings, the Elder was gloomy, and had not one word of cheer concerning his field. The missionary quoted all the cheerful and cheering promises of God's word he could remember; but none of them seemed to suit the Elder's condition of mind.

When the long ride was ended, the good wife who presided over the parsonage greeted us with such a delightful welcome, that it seemed sad that the husband of such a woman could ever be discouraged. After a refreshing lunch, we sat down to "lay out our campaign."

"Now, just how long can you stay with us?" asked the Elder.

"My next appointment is for Tuesday afternoon; and in order to reach it, I shall have to be at the station early Tuesday morning," was the reply.

"Then," said the Elder, "you will have to leave here Monday afternoon."

"That will give us time for two evening meetings before Sunday services, as this is Friday afternoon."

Our plans were all made, and we immediately set out to notify the villagers that a meeting would occur that evening at the Baptist Church.

The sun was just disappearing behind the huge trees which surrounded the pretty village.

Passing up the main street, we noticed a dozen young men, from twenty to twenty-five years of age, take positions for a little base ball practice in catching. Now it happened that, in years gone by, the national game had great attractions for the missionary; the question of devoting his life to that of a professional base ball player had been seriously considered. It was a game into which he had thrown all his energies; the handling of ball and bat seemed to be part of himself. To this day, he cannot see a game of base ball played without wanting a part in it. As he stood in front of the village store, watching the young men about their sport, he could not refrain from asking a place in the game. The first ball thrown to him traveled as if there were powder behind it; and though it felt as if the flesh would be torn from his hand, the missionary held the sphere, to the surprise of the one who had thrown it with such swiftness; the ball was quickly delivered in like manner to the one who had sent it, and the stranger was soon at home with the players. As darkness came on the practice ceased. Immediately the ball

tossers gathered about the visitor, not knowing who he was, or whence he came. One of them, who proved to be the captain of the nine, said:

"You seem to understand handling a ball. Do you play regularly?"

The missionary replied that he had not played ball for several years, and so, of course, was out of practice. The captain then said:

"We go over the prairie to R. to-morrow, for a match game, and our short stop is sick. We should be obliged, if you would go with us and play that position."

"In ten or fifteen minutes you shall know my decision"—and the missionary went to the parsonage, to consult with the Elder about accepting the invitation.

"Does the Society," said he, "send you to Minnesota to play base ball with such an ungodly set of young men as we have in this town? No, sir; if you go, it will be your own free act, for which I will not be accountable."

On his way back to report his decision, the missionary asked for wisdom from on high to reach those young men. He asked the character of the game,

and learned that it was to decide upon the relative superiority in the county; that no money, or anything else, was involved; and that it was a match in which skill was to win. A promise was made to return the new player in time for the Saturday evening service in the church. The conditions of the promise brought a look of astonishment over their faces. The invitation was accepted, to the apparent satisfaction of all the players.

Early on Saturday morning, a string of teams left the village, led by the uniformed nine. After three or four hours' ride through a rough and muddy timber road, the scene of the match game was reached; the prairie grass had been cut the day before, making a beautiful playground.

The game was played. The missionary, in his palmiest base ball days, never played a better game, both at the bat and in the field; his score was the best of the game; his skill was considered the feature of the game, which won the victory. During the entire day scarcely a word of profanity escaped the lips of these "ungodly young men," and but few angry words were spoken. The mention of the Saturday evening service may have caused the young

men to mistrust that a minister had spent the day in their society.

At six o'clock on Saturday evening, the procession of teams returned to the village, the players singing the victors' song. As the first team stopped at the village store, and the players stepped out, the captain thanked the visitor for accompanying them, and then asked:

"Now, who are you, and what are you doing here? Are you a minister?"

"No, sir," he replied; "but I am a Sunday-school missionary, and want, to-morrow, to start a good Baptist Sunday-school in this town."

"Well," said the captain, "you've served us a good turn to-day, and if we can help you in any way, just call on us."

They were at once invited to attend the meeting that evening, which they did, after going home to change their base ball suits for their "best clothes." The truth took hold upon their hearts; and, in conversation, several admitted that they ought to be Christians, and would give the matter serious thought.

On Sunday, they came into the Sunday-school,

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and, by their presence and aid in singing, helped to make the newly organized school a success. In the evening, the church was filled as it had not been for years, with a deeply interested congregation. The missionary longed to remain for a series of meetings, but other appointments prevented.

On Monday afternoon, as the Elder left the missionary at the railway station, he said:

"I had no idea what you were after when you proposed that unmissionary excursion last Saturday, with those young men, who have not been inside of a meeting-house since I came to the village. You certainly got hold of them; and I wish you could stay to take advantage of the ground now occupied."

Three years after this experience, it was a source of pleasure to the missionary, in making out his Annual Report, to record the name of the captain of the base ball nine as still the Secretary of that Sunday-school.

UP-HILL WORK.

"HO, for Minnesota!" shouted a young business man in an Eastern city, as he entered his pleasant home one evening, after the dullest of dull days in his store. "The West is the place for young men, and I am satisfied that Minnesota has entered upon a rapid growth and prosperous development."

The young wife had for a long time known of her husband's restlessness, and was not surprised that a decision had been reached. Her mother hoped no mistake would be made, and said:

"One thing we must remember, if the West is to be our home, that, under all circumstances, we do all we can for the cause of Christ."

The good woman had often heard of those who, in Eastern places, were consistent Christians, but, in the West, became so absorbed in gaining this world's goods, that God and his claims were forgotten.

After enjoying such church privileges for fifty years, she felt that to be deprived of them would be the saddest part of her life in the West. As she thought the matter over, the conviction that God's hand was in it all, strengthened her, and she felt that their family might be of some use in a land where churches were so much needed. Talking the matter over, her son asked:

"Why is it that so many church members who go to the West, so soon forget their obligations and responsibilities?"

"I suppose," replied his good wife, that, "having been so used to church life in the East, and going to places where church privileges are not so great, they become careless. Then, too, it may be they become so intensely interested in securing the wealth of this world, that no time is left for securing the true riches of the kingdom."

How well she answered the question may be seen in following them to the West.

Never having been west of New York State, it seemed a long distance to Minnesota. They decided upon making their home in one of the new and enterprising towns of the State.

The young business man succeeded in securing a fine location on the main business street. In a short time he had built up a fine trade; he was regarded as one of the leading business men of the place. A few years would have found him in very comfortable circumstances.

The railroads were pushed further west, and the fine farming lands of Minnesota were producing the finest of wheat. So successful were the farmers, that many who knew but little of agriculture, were seized with the farming fever. Men closed out good paying stores, and hurried to the farming regions. Among them was the one whom we have followed from the East.

Two years of failure in crops, and the purchase of expensive farm machinery, satisfied our business man that he had made the mistake of his life. The severe winters on the prairies, with all the accompanying difficulties, brought homesickness in its worst form to the Eastern family. No school privileges, no church, no preaching service, isolation from the outside world, made their lot a hard one indeed.

The mother saw now, as never before, the sad loss of church privileges; she felt that something should

be done for the new railroad town three miles away; but just what could be done was not known. On looking up the matter, it was learned that seven other Baptists lived in the neighborhood, all of them poor in this world's goods. All were willing to enter into the organization of a church. The new town was growing rapidly. Six hundred in population was soon reached, but not a church of any name had been organized.

A new church was organized; the little band had no meeting-house, neither money with which to erect one. The school-house was secured for public service whenever a preacher should come that way. The coming of a minister of the gospel was a semi-annual occurrence. Every Sunday morning a prayer-meeting was held, which, with the regular monthly church covenant meeting, constituted the services of this frontier Baptist Church.

When the Association met the following spring, the letter from this little church contained the following: "We are few in numbers, but strong in faith, and poor as poverty itself."

The need of a meeting-house was deeply felt, but the lack of funds more deeply. They had a mind to

build, but the task of raising the necessary money seemed a well-nigh hopeless task. But the heroic little band determined to do all they could, and trust the Lord to do the rest. Doing all they could meant self-sacrifice to a large extent, less clothing, less food, no luxuries. Two of the young women lived out; two more went out sewing—that every member of the church might give something toward the new meeting-house.

After much difficulty, lots were secured from the railroad company. The new frame of a store building, which had been left half finished, was bought at a reasonable figure; but their funds were gone before being able to move the building to their church lots. A loan from the Home Mission Society helped them very much. In a few days after the money was received, by the aid of all the male members of the church, the frame of what was intended to be their church home was in its place. The small loan was soon disposed of, but the building was far from completion.

Among the first furnishings was a good baptistery. About this time the Associational missionary conducted special revival services in the school-house.

Before leaving, he baptized nine believers in the new baptistery in the unfinished meeting-house. No sooner did the revival begin, than Satan became even more active than he had been. "Bigoted Baptists," "Close communion sect," was cried from house to house; prejudice was aroused; hindrances were placed in the way of the new church. The work seemed to stop.

Our family from the East were showing of what material they were composed. When the Sunday-school missionary visited the place and organized a Sunday-school, they took hold of the work very heartily; the husband was elected superintendent, and, under his able management, was soon as well organized as the average Sunday-school in the State from which he came. A library was presented to the school, and soon the boys and girls of the place became much interested in the new school; a number of them were converted and brought into the church.

Renewed effort was made to complete the house of worship; more sacrifices of the necessaries of life were made; but ability to finish without a debt was beyond all possibility, unless outside help could be secured. The worthiness of the case being made

known to Eastern churches and individuals, liberal contributions were made; and still six hundred dollars remained to be raised, in order to dedicate free of debt. Again the noble little band lifted far beyond what is ever done by one church in ten thousand.

They were cheered by the assurance that the Church Edifice Fund of the Home Mission Society would make a gift of three hundred dollars to complete the building. The final effort was made, and the edifice comfortably finished. The joy about to dawn upon the little church was doomed to be changed to sorrow. A note from the Home Mission Society stated that no more funds remained for church edifices, and their application would have to be declined. Of course, the church remained undedicated.

Our Eastern family moved into town, that their children might attend school. Their residence in the village was a great help. As winter came on, the fuel required to heat the building became a large item in their expenses; and, having to pay interest on the loan from the Home Mission Society, they were compelled to hold their meetings from house to house.

About this time, the Sunday-school missionary

spent a Sunday with them. Some of the members had gone ten or twelve miles to cut wood and haul it, that the house might be warmed on the Lord's Day referred to. When a general worker visited them, they believed in making use of him. Accordingly, meetings were appointed, and many indicated their hunger for the gospel.

At nine o'clock, a prayer-meeting of an hour was conducted; at ten o'clock, the regular church covenant meeting was held, as all the members of the church had by that time come in from the surrounding country; at eleven o'clock, a Bible reading was conducted; at noon, the Bible studying service was held; at three o'clock in the afternoon, a mass meeting for all the boys and girls was held; at seven o'clock, a service of song, lasting half an hour; at half-past seven, a gospel service, with an after meeting, concluded the Sunday services, all of which were largely attended. The public services crowding the building to its utmost.

On Monday, about the time for morning worship in the family where the missionary was entertained, five of the members of the church entered, none of them knowing the errand of the others; they had

left their morning's work to be present at the hour of devotion. As the missionary read and commented upon a chapter adapted to their circumstances, every face beamed with interest, and hearts beat with new determination to continue in patience. As the missionary kneeled to pray, and concluded the petition, the member kneeling at his right began praying; as she concluded, the next engaged in prayer; and before rising from their knees every one in that prayer circle had offered their petitions. Is it any wonder that this praying band had power with God, and undertook great things in his name?

Two years after their organization as a church, the Association was invited to meet with them. Their letter reported:

"We have no pastor as yet; still poor in this world's goods, but rich in faith. God has added seventeen to our number by baptism. Our meeting-house, valued at twelve hundred dollars, is all paid for but three hundred dollars, which we are hoping to receive from the Home Mission Society. We are praying the Lord to send us a good under shepherd; we are all ready to work with such an one for the upbuilding of Christ's kingdom throughout the world."

Our Eastern family found life in the West very much in contrast with that of their former home. The desecration of the Lord's Day was painful to them; business was as eagerly pursued on that day as upon others. There was much to discourage and dishearten; but the decided stand taken by these out and out Baptists will not cease bearing fruit throughout eternity.

Two of the young ladies in this Western frontier church have decided to give their lives to the service of their Master on foreign fields. The little church cannot well spare two such workers; but when they see the greater need in heathen lands, not one of the members would have them stay. The summit reached already by the "up-hill work" that our Eastern friends have found during their life in the West, permits them to see how the Lord's hand was in their coming to Minnesota.

FOLLOWING LEADERS.

WHIRLING along on the morning train over the Sioux City Division of the famous Royal Route, on my way to conduct a Sunday-school Institute, my thoughts revert to a little incident of travel. A goodly number of great men, known as leaders in our denomination, were passengers on the train that was bearing us to the national anniversaries at Saratoga. Among my traveling companions were one or two D. D.'s, filling prominent pulpits, the editor of a leading denominational paper, and a celebrated professor in one of our higher institutions of learning. The all-night ride had given us an appetite for our morning meal. The train stopped for breakfast in the large Union Depot. Entering the dining-room, we were informed that we should have "twenty minutes for refreshments." We ordered our steak, rolls, and coffee. Being very hungry, we made no

note of time; we tarried long at our coffee. My companions retired. I was alone with my coffee. Emerging from the refreshment room two minutes later, I looked, and there, upon the rear platform of a train just moving out of the depot, were my illustrious companions in travel. I immediately increased my speed, and violated one of my traveling rules by boarding the moving train. Almost out of breath, I was greeted by one of our denominational leaders:

"Well, Brother Smith, you almost missed it."

We had gone about a quarter of a mile down the yard when the train stopped, and we learned that the side track was its destination.

Now, you readily see that I reasoned on this wise as I beheld that out-going train:

"There is the doctor, and the rest of those great men. That is my train." Then, of course, I immediately followed my illustrious predecessors. I surely thought I was on the right train when I saw such leading men on board, and said to myself: "They are worthy to be followed."

When the train stopped, we all very meekly, but in somewhat of a hurry, made our way back to the Union Depot, where stood our train, plainly pla-

carded. We then took the right train, and were soon whirling along, very tired, but men who had resolved to look before we again leaped upon an outgoing train. Whenever this little episode has been recalled to my memory, the ludicrous side has always presented itself.

Do we not, all through life, find many estimable people who have taken the wrong train, because pastor, parent, and teacher have, before them, made the mistake of taking the train going off on a side track?

Let us look into some of the coaches composing the wrong train.

In the first car are the second-class passengers, who believe in traveling as cheaply as possible; among them are men and women who patronize what are called undenominational publishing houses, because their publications seem on the surface to be a few cents cheaper; then, too, Baptist literature would hurt the feelings of some good people of other denominations who live in their neighborhood. It is very strange that so many good men and women take this second-class coach; and just so long as they do, they will be sure of numerous fellow-passengers, who,

with them, are "on the wrong train." These misguided ones think they are on the right train, because some of their leading members are seen *on the rear platform.*

In the second coach are the representatives of a certain church where I recently worshiped. There was present a large congregation; among the worshipers were at least two hundred of the church members. The music, responsive reading, prayers, and sermon, had all been apparently enjoyed by these noble two hundred. The pastor extended a most cordial invitation for *all* to remain to the Bible studying service. The benediction was pronounced; all but about twenty-five of the church members present retired. I asked myself: "Why is this?" A reason flashed upon me at once. There was Deacon G., Mr. C., Mrs. H., and others, known as *leaders* in the congregation; *they had boarded the outgoing train.* The others, reasoning that men and women of such intelligence and prominence must surely be *on the right train*, hastened to follow them. When their coach is side-tracked, will they come back and take the right train?

In the next coach is represented a class of highly

respectable but nevertheless mistaken class of passengers. In this car I meet a Pedobaptist lady, who, in some way or other, learns that I am a Baptist, and forthwith challenges my position. Of course I contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. Immediately she defends her position by saying:

"My pastor is one of the leading ministers of Chicago; and if baptize means nothing but immerse, he would not and could not maintain his position; for he is too good a man to be mistaken."

"Yes," I answer, "another instance of one taking the wrong train because men who are leaders are on board. How many honest and well-meaning people have boarded the out-going train as it departs from God's own truth so plainly taught in his word, because eminent ministers, and others before them, made the mistake of *taking the train going off on a side track.*"

The next coach is packed full of passengers, representing thousands in our churches. Here is found a superintendent and his teachers. He is a good man; all love him, and are willing to be his fellow-helpers. In his school are many bright, active, and wide-awake boys and girls, soon to be the men and women of our

churches. In response to the call of superintendent and teachers, the pupils bring their money for the regular Sunday collection; they are constantly admonished that if not persistent in their contributions, some Sunday will find them without Lesson Helps and papers. The treasury of the school is never out of money, and additions are continually being made to its own library. In short, it is a self-centred school. The *leaders* in the churches where the officers and teachers were educated (?) always did that way, and *so it must be right.* O switchman, side-track the passengers on this outgoing train, departing from the simplest principles of benevolence; tell them to return to the grand principles laid down in God's word for the culture of cheerful givers. So many have taken this coach of covetousness, that constant appeals from all our missionary organizations become painful necessities. So fruitless are these appeals, that overdrawn treasuries are urgently in need of funds, while millions of the Lord's money are in the possession of passengers who are on board this wrong train, because men of wealth before them have made the great mistake of robbing God. Many there be that follow them.

O ye travelers, who have *taken the wrong train* of failing to impart to pupils the knowledge of the great missionary work being done by our denomination, come back. Take the right train! Make time in your Bible-studying service to instruct the pupils as to the wonderful work being done through our Missionary Union, Home Mission, Publication, and Educational Societies, for the evangelization of the world. Then shall there rise up a generation filled with a true missionary spirit; those who shall give willingly, and as God prospers them, and who "remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

In the next coach are found representatives of our church members—superintendents, teachers, aye, and many pastors. It is the "smoking car." We must pass very hastily through this filthy coach. It is sickening. Here is a bright boy; his Sunday-school teacher has warned him against the disgusting habit of tobacco using. The bright boy asks his teacher:

"Don't you think my father is a good man?"

Upon receiving his teacher's affirmative, he at once says:

"Well, if he *is*, and the use of tobacco is not right, my father would not use it."

Within a few months, the bright boy is a slave to his father's almost life-long habit. All because his father *has taken the wrong train*, which his boy thought the right one, reasoning on this wise:

"There's my father, Deacon G., and other leading church members. They all smoke; so it must be right."

Pastors, parents, and teachers, are you in the "smoking-car," *on this wrong train?* The bright boy also wonders why Mr. H—who is one of the leading church members—keeps tobacco and liquor for sale in his store. He is called a temperance man, is never seen intoxicated; yet *for the sake of the gain*, will sell liquors, and not use his influence directly against the liquor traffic; he does not seem to think of the possibility and probability of his own boy becoming a recruit for King Alcohol's army. Two classes only are found in the "smoking car"—smokers and liquor drinkers. Oh, that Christians on this car might be *side-tracked at once!*

Next we come to the comfortable "chair car." In it are found many of our church members the even-

ing of the mid-week prayer-meeting. This *is* a comfortable car. A visit to an ordinary Wednesday or Thursday—yea, and Sunday evening service—will satisfy the most critical visitor that the pastor was not far out of the way when he prayed for "the members of our church who are on *beds of illness and chairs of wellness.*" What a delightful journey it would be for our pastors, if the passengers on their train did not so delight in having *an easy time* in the chair cars on the popular stay-at-home-narrow-gauge-road! This car is certainly on the wrong track; the passengers change the old hymn, and make it read:

I must be carried to the skies
On flowery beds of ease.

Others, seeing their conduct, proceed at once to follow them. Dear ease-seeker, put a little of the enthusiasm you have in your own every-day business, into that of your Lord; be about his business more actively, and you will soon get on to *the right train*, where you are so much needed.

Here is the "dining car." Mothers and fathers are seen in this coach. The "bill of fare" is in their hands. On the table is found the literature on which their minds are fed. Here is the latest sensational

novel; near it is the trashy weekly paper; infidel lectures and papers, filled with the latest criminal news, are spread for the boys and girls to feed upon. Is it any wonder that young people, in such homes, early seek that which is craved by their lowest animal appetites? The "bill of fare" has food which is able to elevate the hungry minds of our youth; see to it, then, that healthy food is placed before your children, as well as yourselves. Money spent for good reading is well spent. Reading of books and papers in many homes has sent more than one boy or girl "*off on the wrong track.*" May God help our home-makers to be sure that their "dining car" *is on the right track!* The boys and girls are likely to "take the train" on which mother and father travel.

The rear coach is the "sleeping car." The "Wicked One" has "made up the berths" in which so many thousands of professed Christian people are asleep. The adversary of our souls, and the seeker after the souls of those about us, has put to sleep many parents, pastors, and teachers in our churches. He will always do his best to get passengers to *take the wrong train,* and use every effort to induce them to take a sleeper. He says:

"There's Doctor —, Mr. and Mrs. B.; that is your train."

At one of the largest Christian councils ever held in New York City, B. F. Jacobs, Esq., called for an expression, aiming to show the most fruitful field of Christian labor. It was learned that in the very large congregation present, a very small number were brought to Christ after attaining the age of twenty years. Who were found in that large audience to have given themselves to King Jesus in their youth? Nearly *all* the leading men of our denomination. Yet, how many of our "leading men" prepare sermons far beyond the reach of our boys and girls, with the hope of reaching some "prominent business man" that sits in the congregation, or some one of mighty intellect; some "heads of families"; or, it may be, a "woman prominent in society," and known as "a noble woman." Yet Paul says: "Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called." And Jesus says: "Except ye be converted and become as *little* children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." A pastor writes to his religious paper: "Seven baptized recently, *three of them heads of families.*" God give the pastors

many more "heads of families"; but which is of the more value to Christ's cause, "the head of a family," whose best years have been given to the service of the devil, or the boy and girl who begin early in life in the service of Christ?" Good old Doctor Tyng once said:

"The devil stands at the church door, and says to many preachers: 'Aim at the big ones.'"

And many there be who follow his Satanic advice. The Lord knows I would not limit the power of the gospel, for it is mighty to save the most hardened and depraved wretch who will but look at the Crucified One; but the facts in the case show plainly that, if we look for the source whence most of the members of the Christian church have come, it will be found among those under twenty years of age. This is a deeply interesting truth. A very wide observer has said:

"We can raise more Christians by juvenile culture than by adult conversion—a thousand to one."

Statistics and facts show that those brought to Christ early in life make the most earnest and consistent Christians. If many of our pastors and parents were not *slumbering in this sleeper on the*

wrong train, who could estimate the advancement of our Redeemer's kingdom in a single year?

A pastor said to me not long ago:

"I am all in the dark when I make any effort to preach to the children of my congregation."

"And I!" "And I!" comes the chorus of many pastors in our land. Is it because the devil in darkness hath put thee in the sleeper? "Awake thou that sleepest, and Christ shall give thee light." "If any of you lack wisdom, let him *ask of God*." Many a pastor has put himself through a rigid and severe season of preparation, that he might become a workman that needeth not to be ashamed in dividing the word of truth to those of whom Christ said: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Do your words or actions show that you are on the wrong train of "aiming at the big ones?"

"JORDAN!" calls the brakeman; and here we meet "the train on the up-grade." Oh, parents, pastors, and teachers, "*change cars*"; for in a little while we shall all be "on the other side of Jordan."

BAYTOWN SUNDAY-SCHOOL ORGANIZED.

YES, they wanted a Baptist Sunday-school at Baytown, which village was seven miles from the railroad station, at the head of a large lake. Nothing would satisfy the inhabitants thereof but a visit from the Sunday-school missionary. He must canvass that neighborhood; "for a hundred children were running wild in the woods and on the prairies in that vicinity, and they ought to be caged, at least, one hour each week."

Deacon C. had promised to provide transportation from the station to Baytown. Accordingly he met the missionary, took him to his home, and in one hour announced that preparations were completed for our trip.

"A friend to the cause" kindly loaned us a horse, which had reached the age of maturity, having served his time in the regular army during the war. He was branded U. S.—*useful still*, we took it to mean.

The steed had been named "Buck," probably for a former President of the United States. "Buck" was a good walker; he did nothing else but walk; it was his constitutional gait. With this introduction to our motive power, we invite the reader to a seat in our open wagon. An additional passenger may lessen our speed, but "Buck's" owner has assured us that "we'll git thar if we keep agoin'."

Through sinking sand, over rocky roads, and beside beetling bluffs, we urge our burdened beast. At the expiration of three hours, we discover, in a gloomy glen, the village of Baytown. It strikes us as a fit place for a Sunday-school light to be placed. The town looked sleepy—we have noticed that a real, live Baptist Sunday-school is a most effective means of waking up a sleepy town. The houses have all been painted by the well-known firm, WIND AND WEATHER, and are murky monuments of their skill.

But in this town there is a Baptist lady from the East, upon whose heart the need of a Sunday-school has been heavily laid; she has been urgently requesting the missionary to come over into Baytown and help them.

A thorough canvass of the neighborhood reveals a

deep desire on the part of parents for the establishment of a Sunday-school, in which their children may be gathered, instead of having them roam in the woods, hunting and fishing, as has been their wont for years; nor is this case an isolated one, for hundreds of such places are to be found in Minnesota alone.

With a promise to return the next Saturday, we are given a liberal lunch, and hasten to meet other appointments. "Buck" was in far less haste than we, but finally brings us to the station, whence the "iron horse" speeds us on our way.

Returning on Saturday afternoon, we find that Deacon C. has arranged for us a boat ride to Baytown, evidently calculating to save money, on the principle that "time is money," dispensing with "Buck's" services this time. Says the deacon:

"We can take turns, rowing."

We seat ourselves in the little row-boat, just as the sun is setting between two beautiful islets in the lake; golden bars are reflected on the smooth surface. It is a glorious picture, and we wonder if our childhood's imagination, that heaven's gates were "just over yonder," is entirely without foundation. We

row along very leisurely, not noticing that "night shadows come on apace," until landmarks sink out of sight. Numerous islands crowd the head of the lake, as vain imaginations crowd the human head. We venture the question—

"Well, deacon, are we nearly there?"

In reply, we receive the cheerful intelligence couched in the answer:

"Well, now, I've kind o' lost my bearin's, and am ruther oncertain which of them islands is Tamarac and which is Spunk. We want to leave Spunk to our right, and when we reach Phillips's old mill, we'll be pretty nigh Baytown."

Seeing "lights along the shore" we suggest landing and inquiring where we are; but the deacon assures us that—

"We ain't got there yet. I'll bring you safe to your journey's end; so don't be afeared."

On we row, leaving the friendly lights far behind. After proceeding about two miles, the good deacon says:

"Guess I'll go ashore and see ef I can tell where we be; you can pull kind o' slow-like, and we'll soon find our location."

The darkness increases, and we begin to fear we shall be compelled to camp out for the night; when a voice calls:

"Pull for the shore; I know where we be now."

Heading the boat in the direction from which the voice came, a landing is soon made. The boat is drawn up the beach, and we lade ourselves with heavy satchels, oars, rudder, and other implements too valuable to lose by leaving behind. Up the sandy beach we follow our guide, full of hope as our shoes are of sand, when the leader remarks: "I *guess* this is the road," but after traveling a few rods are informed: "we'll have to go back, for this road hain't traveled like a main road."

So back to our starting-point by the lake-side we go, while the darkness grows more intense.

"Well, deacon, are we almost there?" we ask, cheerfully.

"Well, I do declare for it, I'm beat this time, sure; these roads is mighty bothersome in the night-time." Of which fact we are fully convinced. "*Guess* we was right in taking the other road," says the deacon. So, countermarching, we follow him. After going over the road already trod, we discover, half a mile

distant, a light, and follow our sandy way almost tired out with our burdensome baggage. Our guide knows the house, in the window of which we see the light, and cheerfully informs us we are *only about a mile from Baytown.*

It is just impossible to carry our seventy-five pounds of Bibles, books, and other luggage, a rod further. We accordingly cast our burden under a tree by the wayside, and pursue our onward way.

We at length arrive at the residence of our eastern Baptist lady, who has been waiting our arrival since six o'clock, and now it is after nine; but a delicious repast of fragrant tea, and light, flaky biscuits, with choice butter, and a liberal supply of dropped eggs, refreshes us exceedingly.

The deacon, in conversation with the lady's husband, tells him of our weary walk and inability to carry our "traps" nearer than a mile from their house; our host immediately starts with horse and wagon, accompanied by the deacon, to bring our cast-off burden to its destination.

On their return, what was the deacon's amazement to find that we had rowed three miles further than Baytown, all because he had failed to locate the

islands of Tamarac and Spunk, behind which Baytown was snugly situated.

After evening worship, we gladly lie down to our rest in the comfortable beds provided for us, and know nothing of the vexations and trials of this earthly life, until awaking to find rain dripping upon us through the winter-cracked roof; but this is not a circumstance to be mentioned; as we remember, only a few weeks before, sleeping in a room next the roof, to awake in the morning to find a mantle of beautiful snow covering the lower half of the bed, and the cold reception given one foot as it was thrust into a sock full of snow.

On Sunday morning, about thirty gathered in the school-house of the village, to hear the gospel preached. In the afternoon, the room was packed full with an unusually quiet and attentive congregation. The hour for organizing the new Sunday-school is at hand. All heads are bowed while we seek the divine blessing upon this new enterprise. Every one knows how earnestly our eastern Baptist lady has labored and prayed for this day; she is unanimously chosen superintendent by acclamation. Other officers are chosen.

Who shall be teachers of these one hundred children? We inquire, and find that there are but two Christians among them—the superintendent and her aged father, upwards of eighty. The lady has a daughter who once made a profession of religion; but Western ways and customs have led her into a class of young people who think it all of life to dance and seek other worldly amusement; her interest in Christian work has accordingly perished. It is a time when every Christian must be rallied to stand at the post of duty.

The lesson of the day has, of course, been unstudied and unread; so the missionary comments on the passage of Scripture; and, finding a good opportunity to preach the gospel from the lesson, he does not allow it to pass unimproved. Why do those eyes and ears give such earnest and undivided attention to "the old, old story?" While it is being told, Grandpapa Fiske cannot refrain from an occasional "That's true," "Yes," and other kindred expressions, which go to prove the truth in the lines:

For those who know it best,
Seem hungering and thirsting
To hear it like the rest.

At the close of the session, the young lady who has danced her opportunities away, comes to the desk, and, with an earnest look in her beautiful eyes, says:

"I want to be a better Christian than I have been, and try to help some of these boys and girls to love Jesus."

"Yes, Miss Hattie," we say to her, "the Lord Jesus wants you to do that very thing right in this Baytown Sunday-school."

"Pray for me," she then says; "and I'll help just all I can in this work."

Pray for her? Who would not, when one who is a leader in worldly pleasures resolves to forsake them and serve her Lord and Master? What an influence can she wield in this community, and who can tell how many souls this reconsecrated Christian may lead to the Saviour?

As the time of leaving for other appointments arrives, dear old grandpapa's emotions overcome him, and he says:

"This has been one of the happiest days in all my long life." And as he bids the missionary "good-bye," the old man kisses him, and weeps for joy.

The happiness given this dear old man of God, by

Spicy Breezes.

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the work of the day, more than compensates for the toilsomeness of the trip to Baytown.

We enter our little row-boat for our return trip to the railroad station. A dark cloud appears in the southwest; we have not rowed a mile, before the rain falls in torrents, and not a house or tree to be seen, to afford us shelter; drenched to the skin, we still continue our way. In half an hour the rain ceases; but the clouds are angry-looking, and wild; we must hasten, or night will overtake us on the lake. So, bending to our oars, we pull straight for the other shore, about two miles away. The rain descends again, and harder than before; but no time is to be thrown away putting on our coats.

When about a mile from the shore, as we round an island, a sudden squall strikes us, and we are driven before the wind, into a great pile of driftwood, between two islands. It seems hopeless to think of reaching the station, as darkness gathers rapidly. Rolling up our sleeves to the shoulder, we endeavor to force our way through the driftwood, by pushing aside the logs and bushes. Succeeding at last, we are somewhat sheltered between the islands; but no sooner do we come to the open lake than the wind

drives us from our course, and the waves, which are now ocean-like, are filling our little boat; we try to remove some of the water, by using our hats as dippers. Soon we are forcibly driven into willow bushes; it is necessary for us to hold firmly to the willows that our boat be not swamped; this we do till almost tired out. Darkness has settled round us, and we are nearly a mile from our landing place; but with night comes the stilling of the wind. As the waves are quieted, we again row along, as might be expected of two wearied oarsman.

Our little remaining strength is exhausted, as we pull our boat up on the beach, near the railroad station. It is ten o'clock before we arrive at the deacon's; his wife has been not a little worried at our long delay in reaching home. The deacon's hands, as well as our own, are blistered by hard work. As we finish a late supper, the good man says:

"Well, we're 'home agin from a furrign shore,' and the next time we go to Baytown, we'll take old "Buck," and so save expense, time, and human flesh; but I suppose you're used to such experiences, in your missionary wanderings; and I reckon, after all, we folks as stay to home, do have the pleasantest times."

SUMMER WINDS.

A BUSINESS-MAN'S EXPERIENCE.

FOR several days, the wind had been blowing from the south; the clouds betokened rain, but it did not come; the wind ceased; the air became sultry; and for a day or two, the heat was most oppressive. On the afternoon of the third day, there was seen far over the prairie, a small, dark cloud; as it came nearer, the inhabitants of the vicinity watched it as it assumed a funnel shape, the smaller end seeming to touch the earth; soon the air was filled with a great luminous cloud, which had a murky appearance at first, but soon became of inky blackness. Suddenly the air was filled with flying pieces of buildings, trees, fences, and everything possible for a cyclone to move. For miles, the track of the terrible tornado could be traced, as it hurried on its destructive mission. Here a whole village destroyed; there a farm house, with all its outbuildings, swept into the lake; crops cut by the unseen blade of the destroying

reaper. The public press was filled with minute details of the destruction wrought by the cyclone.

In one of the thriving Minnesota towns, near the scene of the storm, two business men were engaged in conversation. Said one:

"I suppose no one really knows why God permits such disasters to visit this earth; but I am inclined to think that it is to rebuke those who are robbing him."

"Please explain what you mean," said the other.

"Well," said his neighbor, "I believe that a tenth of every dollar which comes into a man's or woman's possession, is the Lord's; and, also, the increase of whatever represents money should be tithed."

"Look out, my friend; you are getting back to the old law."

"I go *farther* back than the old law; for Abraham and Jacob both paid tithes."

"Well, neighbor, how is it with you? Do you give a tenth of all your increase to the Lord?"

"Yes, sir; and have been doing so for several years."

"If everybody did that, how much better support the poor ministers would have."

"Yes, the progress of Christianity throughout the world would be so rapid that unbelievers would quickly close scoffing lips, to see the devotion of Christians to the cause they have espoused."

"But what have cyclones to do with the tenth business?"

"We read that the tithes of all things are the Lord's. If men will not give what belongs to God, he will send his messengers and take what is his own. Flood, flame, storm, cyclones, and the devourer, will do their work. This, of course, is my own personal opinion, and no one else is responsible for my way of thinking."

The missionary was much interested in this man, whom he had recognized as one of God's cheerful givers. After taking tea with him, our conversation turned upon the subject discussed during the afternoon. The missionary asked this business man to relate his experience concerning his conversion to proportionate giving, which he accordingly did, as follows:

"I was born in New England. My father was a member of the Baptist Church in the village. He was a man who believed in 'looking out for number

one.' He owned the farm which had been managed by his father and his father's father. This farm had supported several generations. It was being continually improved, until it had become one of the best in the State. Father was never absent from prayer-meeting, unless sickness prevented his attendance, and was considered one of the substantial members of the church. He gave twenty-five dollars for the support of the gospel every year. All his children were given a fair education. They inherited from their father a large degree of selfishness; he had taught them to be very careful as to how they *spent any money*, and to be sure their investments would yield the largest possible income.

"Everybody said I was 'a chip of the old block'; and with these qualities I left my eastern home, twenty years ago, to come to the West. I succeeded in getting a farm very reasonably. Crops were excellent the first year, and I was able to build me a comfortable house and have a little to spare, which I invested in farming implements. The second year's crops were even better than the first. I was comfortably situated in this world's goods.

"As the years passed on, children came to gladden

our hearts and home. No man and wife had more reason for thankfulness than we. As settlers came into the neighborhood, we felt the need of church privileges; and soon a missionary of the Home Mission Society located near us. Meetings were held in the old log school-house; it was a place where many were born again. Of course we felt called upon to do something for the support of the gospel. I pledged ten dollars the first year; and we raised, in cash and donations, about two hundred dollars for our minister. The next winter there was a powerful revival, and our membership was doubled.

"About this time a Baptist minister from New England located a claim in our neighborhood. He talked with a few of us, and said he would be willing to preach for us, if we would raise him fifty dollars a year. He was very generous hearted, and said while we were getting our farms into shape, it would help us not to have to pay out so much for preaching. We talked it over, and finally decided to let our Home Mission man go, and employ our New England preacher. I tell you, we did miss the pastoral visits of Elder Williams, but thought we could do without pastoral visitation, until we had got our

farms paid for and pretty well improved. That winter there was no revival, and the young people assembled two or three times a week for a dance, but cared nothing for the worship of God. A spiritual coldness came over the members of the church; they began to go visiting on Sundays. In less than a year our neighborhood was a pleasure-seeking community, who habitually neglected the Lord's Day.

"We sold our farm, for we did not wish to bring up our children amid such surroundings; we moved into this town and took our church-letters, uniting with the new Baptist Church just organized.

"What we realized from our sale enabled us to buy the corner lot on which my store now stands. The Lord prospered us, and soon we were able to buy another lot, on which we built this home. My business increased. I gave twenty-five dollars a year for the spread of the gospel, and felt quite proud over being able to give as much as my father used to in New England. I saw good chances for investing in real estate in our rapidly growing town, and flattered myself that my New England shrewdness, inherited from my father, was placing me in very comfortable circumstances.

"Our children were converted, and united with the church. We all had good health; and no family had more cause for real gratitude than we; and we were thankful to our kind Heavenly Father for giving us such prosperity. I was a little proud when I decided *we could give fifty dollars a year to the Lord.*

"Several years ago, as I was balancing the accounts in my ledger, I took a piece of blank paper, and wrote along the top:

"'H. J. M.,

IN ACCOUNT WITH THE LORD.

DR.

To pardon from sin.
To a hope for the future world.
To good health.
To a prosperous business.
To attendance upon divine service.
To the joy of Christian children.
To continual increase in value of land.
To 100 or more acres of good farm lands.

CR.

By cash paid for pastor's salary, - - $50.00.
By cash paid for benevolence, - - - $15.00.'

"I looked this account over very carefully, and was compelled to admit that the amounts placed to my credit did not balance one of the debits. The question flashed into my mind: '*How* much owest thou unto my Lord?' I then took my Bible, and learned that Paul said, 'Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him." Then I said, 'It is my business to lay by something *every week* for the Lord's treasury, if God has prospered me during the week.' The wise man says, 'Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the *first fruits* of all thine increase.' Then it is my business to give *first* to the Lord. That seems all right, for *all* the money in the world belongs to the Lord; but what a sight of it is stolen! I felt sure that in all the past years of my life I had been robbing God. Again I went to my Bible; for I believe it should be our guide in giving as well as in baptism. Turning to Malachi, the third chapter, I committed to memory from the eighth to the twelfth verse inclusive. You remember it says:

"'Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In

tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation. Bring ye *all* the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the *devourer* for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the Lord of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the Lord of hosts.'

"As I repeated it over, I was convicted of idolatry; for the good book says *covetousness is idolatry.* I said, '*I have been a robber,* for I have not begun to give the Lord a tenth of all my increase; but have looked after my own comfort and ease, and never *dared* to figure how much of my money should be laid aside for the Lord.' Ever since we began housekeeping, my wife has itemized all our expenses, of every kind; and from her account book, I learned that we were spending upon ourselves not less than $1,500.00 a year, to say nothing of increase in value of real

estate. We then decided that *one hundred and fifty dollars,* at least, should be set aside that year, for the Lord's treasury.

"At the end of the year my net profits in business were tithed; and when we came to need our new meeting-house, I found that we had *over a thousand dollars* in the Lord's treasury, which we cheerfully gave for the new building.

"When we decided to give a tenth of all our increase, we felt that we had no right to speak of *giving,* until we had *paid* the Lord his tenth. I believe the one great reason of so much spiritual dearth in our churches, is covetousness. Not one in ten thousand honors God with the *first* fruits of all the increase bestowed by his bountiful hand."

"Was it a difficult thing to do, after you had made the decision?"—the missionary here ventured to ask.

"The most difficult part was *to make the decision;* for I could readily see that I would have to give more than ten times as much as I had given in the old way, when I was merely giving as much as some one else gave.

"The struggle was caused by the fact that God's word was arrayed against my own selfishness and

pride. But when I came to say, 'Lord, my obligations to thee are far above what they can possibly be to men, and I bring thy tithe first,' there came to me a restful feeling, that I had begun to do what ought to have been done the last thirty years of my life."

"Then, have you been able to *give*, in addition to *paying* the Lord his tenth?"

"Yes; each year we are finding that Paul's plan of laying aside, upon the first day of the week, *as God prospers us*, is by far the best way; and so, during the past year, our subscriptions to benevolent objects were doubled; and next year, we hope to increase them still more."

"May I lay your experience before the public?"

"Yes; on the condition that, under no circumstances, you use our names."

"What shall I say to them about the benefits you have derived from this Scriptural method of laying aside for the Lord's treasury?"

"My only word to any one who may read my experience, is: 'Go and do thou likewise.'"

This was the reply of another of God's children, who had learned by sweet experience that "it is more blessed to give than to receive."

AN IMPROVED SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

THE morning train on the River Road had just left Winona; the rain had been steadily falling all night; not a break in all the dull, leaden cloud from which the rain descended, could be seen. One hour later the rain-storm had increased in violence, while from every ravine and gully a great flood of water poured under and over the road bed. The train had just passed over a wooden bridge, when it was washed away before the rushing torrent. A few miles further the train stopped; for it was discovered that the high railroad bridge we were approaching had also been "washed out." Returning to a very small station between the two bridges, the passengers were compelled to wait for hours, which lengthened to thirty, before the smaller bridge could be repaired so that the train could be backed to the larger town, ten miles away. The rain continued to fall until the noon of the second day, imprisoning the passengers in

the coaches. Everything possible, under the circumstances, was done to pass the time as pleasantly as surroundings would permit. During the delay, the prisoners had time to get acquainted, and many pleasant friendships were formed.

The missionary met a young business-man just returning from the East, whither he had gone to purchase goods for his fall trade. It did not require long for the two to get well acquainted; for the sight of a Baptist paper in the hands of the missionary led the young business-man to remark:

"I judge from the paper you are reading that you must be a Baptist."

"Yes, that is the denomination to which I belong; and, may I ask, are you also a Baptist?"

"I am proud to say that I am, and do not understand why every Christian who believes in the Bible is not."

Upon learning that the Sunday-school missionary had recently been appointed for Minnesota, a cordial invitation was given him to visit the Sunday-school of which the young Baptist business-man was superintendent.

Because of "the tie that binds our hearts in Chris-

tian love," the new acquaintance immediately ripened into a real Christian friendship; and the tedious delay was made far less annoying as they talked of the "things of the kingdom."

Inquiry concerning the Sunday-school revealed the fact that the superintendent very evidently had *his school upon his heart*, and was much pleased to see the marked improvement during the two years of his superintendency. The candid, straightforward manner in which he spoke contained not a particle of egotism, but rather a vein of gladness that the Lord permitted him to have a part in the great Sunday-school work. Arriving at St. Paul, the two friends separate, with a request for the early fulfillment of the promised visit.

Very soon a Sunday was devoted to seeing the improved school—the missionary having for a fellow visitor an Eastern pastor, who was visiting in the city where the superintendent resided.

The school numbered between two and three hundred—a wriggling, restless crowd of boys and girls.

It was an afternoon of an early Sunday in June. The attractions outside the school were many. It was just the kind of a day when boys and girls want

to witness the game of base ball, and enjoy the pleasure excursion. But, somehow or other, the school had above the average attendance.

As we entered the door, the whole school seemed to be in conversation; we wondered if their attention could ever be secured for the opening exercises. There soon stepped to the superintendent's desk a quiet looking man, whom we instantly recognized; he stood before the school in silence; not a word did he speak. Very soon the confusion grew less; but the quiet man uttered not a word, neither did he strike a bell. The school grew less and less noisy. The speechless man took from a pocket his watch, holding it in his hand. Among all the two or three hundred present, only four or five boys were engaged in conversation. With the unoccupied hand the superintendent reached toward the bell (the time for the opening hymn had almost arrived). With watch in his left hand, and the forefinger of his right hand above the bell, he stood silent as a statue. The restless boys discovered the silence reigning about them; their whispering instantly ceased. The school was in perfect order. The quiet man did not disturb them by striking the bell; he stepped to the black-

board and placed thereon the number 94. Immediately the organist took her place; the chorister stood by her side; every singing book was opened to the page indicated upon the board. It seemed as if every voice in the room joined in the opening song. As the last words of the song ceased, the superintendent, in a brief prayer, asked the Lord's blessing upon the session just begun.

When the school was comfortably seated, the man of few words said:

"I want to thank all the boys and girls for the attention given to-day without a single stroke of the bell."

This word of commendation had its effect upon all present. The superintendent then said:

"We will now have seven minutes for business."

The class-books and collection envelopes had been given to the teachers as they entered the school-room.

Immediately the teachers marked the attendance, and verses committed to memory, in their class-books. The school then waited in silence, when the superintendent said:

"Let us hear the secretary's report for last Sunday."

That officer announced: "There were present last Sunday:

Officers, - - - - - - -	8	
Teachers, - - - - - -	26	
Adult Pupils, - - - - -	53	
Total adults present, - - -		87
In the Main Room.		
Girls, - - - - - - -	67	
Boys, - - - - - - -	53	
Total Intermediate Dep't, -		120
In the Primary Class.		
Girls, - - - - - - -	32	
Boys, - - - - - - -	27	
Total in Primary Class, -		59
Visitors, - - - - - - -		12
Whole number in attendance, -		278."

Thus far, but three minutes had been occupied. The treasurer's report was then called for:

"Last Sunday our regular monthly collection was for foreign missions, and amounted to $10.17. This amount has been forwarded to the rooms of the American Baptist Missionary Union."

The superintendent then said:

"According to announcement last Sunday, we bring to-day our monthly offering for the Bible and Missionary Work of the American Baptist Publication Society."

He then gave one or two brief facts concerning the great destitution of Bibles, and the many calls of needy Sunday-schools in the new West. All in the school listened with deep interest to his two minute talk. The boys and girls had learned something about the work of one of our great Missionary Societies. When the teachers passed the collection envelopes the members of that school gave intelligently, and consequently largely, for Bible distribution, religious literature, colportage, and Sunday-school Missions. The superintendent then announced that the following Sunday the school would bring their monthly offerings for the work of the American Baptist Home Mission Society.

Then followed other announcements of meetings during the week. Messengers from each class passed quietly to the secretary's desk, placing thereon class-books and collection envelopes. At the expiration of six minutes, every item of business, connected with the management of the school for that day, was transacted.

The organist then rendered, in an undertone, a quiet voluntary.

Again the school was in perfect order. The superintendent announced a hymn appropriate to the lesson of the day, and all joined heartily in the singing.

The blackboard was again used to indicate where the lesson was to be found. Immediately every Bible and Testament—not a Lesson Help of any kind could be seen in the school—was opened. The assistant superintendent read the first verse, the intermediate department the second, and the adults the third, and so on through the lesson. The manner of reading was varied each Sunday.

The school then rose to join in singing another hymn bearing upon the lesson; and before being seated, were led in a brief prayer, by the pastor. When the school had become seated, the superintendent announced:

"Thirty minutes for the lesson."

The teachers then began their work; and for thirty solid minutes, presented the points of the lesson, brought out in the teacher's meeting, the Friday evening before.

The secretary did not once interrupt the teacher of a single class; for, while they were at the lesson, he sat at his desk, counting the attendance, as marked in each class book by the teachers; and his work for the day was done.

The treasurer did not go to each class, at an important moment, when the teacher's heart was burning to impress some vital truth of the lesson upon the immortal souls in the class. The collection envelopes had been laid upon his desk. After counting and recording the contents, his work for the day was finished.

The superintendent sat at his desk, and, with bowed head, was praying for a blessing upon the work of his teachers, that very moment.

During the session, there were two or three busy men, near the door; but they were not noisy. These men were the librarian and his assistants. There was arranged near the entrance to the room a row of pigeon holes, each of them numbered, and bearing the names of the members of the school, similar in arrangement to the boxes in a post-office. As the members entered the room, each having a box, had placed therein his library book and card. While the

classes were engaged with the lesson, the librarians had exchanged all library books; after which Sunday-school papers and cards were also placed in the various boxes.

Not a teacher was disturbed during the lesson hour. We waited anxiously to witness the closing of such a school, fearing there would be a break. At the expiration of twenty-five minutes, a slight tap of the bell informed the teachers that five minutes remained, in which to close the lesson. Promptly at the moment, the closing bell was sounded. In less than one minute there was perfect order.

The superintendent stepped to the blackboard, and as he turned it, there appeared but two words. In the upper left-hand corner, the word "Unbeliever"; in the opposite, the word "Believer." He did not talk more than five minutes, but brought out these two classes as presented in the lesson of the day. After questioning from the school the names in the lesson, representing the two classes indicated on the board, he quietly said:

"If I could look into each of your hearts to-day, I would know under which of these two words to write your name. He then wrote at the bottom of the

board: "Which am I?" Bowing in prayer, he asked the Holy Spirit to help each member of the school to decide immediately for the Lord Jesus.

The organist then played, and the teachers sang the hymn, "To-day the Saviour Calls." There were numerous thoughtful, and some anxious, souls that day as the session closed.

The secretary then called "Class number three." The class named then arose; and, as they passed out, took from their post-office box library books and papers, and some of them a note from superintendent or teacher. In a very few minutes every class was dismissed quietly and in order. The teachers remained with any pupils that they had found to be anxious. Many of the pupils knelt beside their teachers in the fifteen-minute prayer-meeting which followed. Earnest prayers were offered that all the members of the school might be brought to know Jesus as their only Saviour. After all had gone, we tarried to congratulate the superintendent on his successful school; but he would not listen, and said:

"I thank God every day for the faithful, earnest, and willing teachers in our school, *and give his name all the glory.*"

A MISSIONARY ROOSTER.

THE waving wheat fields of Minnesota were in their glory, and the views from the car window were delightful. I was on my way home from C., one of the country villages of the State. I had been successful in my efforts to bring about an exodus of undenominational literature from the Baptist Sunday-school of the village.

In the afternoon of the Lord's Day, I had conducted a children's service, in the course of which I had talked to the boys and girls upon various ways in which they might assist in our State Sunday-school work, such as raising missionary potatoes, corn, fruit, and turkeys.

At the first station where we stopped, there came aboard the train two mothers, with their nine children; among the children I recognized several of my audience on the previous afternoon.

Occupying but half the seat in the coach in which

I rode, I began watching the children, to see what I could learn. In a short time there were whisperings to mamma, and eyes turned toward the unoccupied half of my car-seat.

Then a bright, happy-faced boy of six years crept up the aisle cautiously, until he was opposite where I sat. I gave the boy a smile, which encouraged him; putting both hands on the arm of the seat, he looked up into my face, and stammeringly asked:

"A-a-ain't y-y-you 'Uncle B-b-boston'?"

"Yes, sir, that is what the boys and girls call me;" and invited him to sit with me.

The little fellow climbed up as quickly as he could. The following conversation occurred:

"Well, where are you going, Clinton?" I asked.

"I-I-I'm going u-u-up N-n-north."

"What do you expect to do there?"

"I'm-m g-g-going to pre-pre-empt a farm."

He had heard his father, who had gone to the Northwest, talk about taking a claim. I then asked:

"Have *you* any money to invest in land?" He put his little hand down into his pocket and brought forth a pocket-book. I told him he must be careful, when traveling, about showing his money to one

whom he did not know. He looked straight into my eyes, and said, most emphatically:

"*I kn-kn-know y-y-you.*"

He then poured the contents into my hand, saying:

"Th-th-there, I g-g-got that m-m-much. I g-g-gave m-m-my t-teacher s-s-some of my-my m-m-money for y-y-you y-y-yesterday."

I thanked the dear little fellow for his interest in our State Sunday-school work, and proceeded to count his three, two, and one cent pieces. The boy had *just nineteen* cents with which to "pre-empt that farm."

By this time the passengers in the coach had become interested in our dialogue, and crowded about us to get every word of the bright, stammering boy. Continuing the conversation, I asked:

"What do you expect to raise on your farm?"

"Oh, w-w-wheat and o-o-oats and c-c-corn; and I'm g-g-going to r-r-raise s-s-something f-f-for *you*."

This showed plainly that the boy remembered more of the sermon than some grown-up people, sometimes. I was inquisitive, and asked:

"Well, what are you going to raise for me?"

"I g-g-guess I-I-'ll have to raise you a ch-ch-chicken."

Desiring to learn whether he was acquainted with the best laying varieties, I asked:

"What kind of a missionary chicken are you going to raise for me?"

"W-w-well, I g-g-guess I-I-I'll have t-t-to r-r-raise you a *r-r-rooster*." This answer was given just as the train stopped at the junction where I was to change cars for another road, and was greeted with a hearty applause by the passengers, who had become intensely interested in our conversation.

My last question, as I picked up my satchel to leave the car, was:

"What good would a rooster do me, I'd like to know?"

"W-w-well, I g-g-guess h-h-he c-c-could cr-cr-crow for you—c-c-couldn't he?"

I left the car in a storm of applause. As I walked along the platform, at the junction, Clinton's head appeared at the open car window. Stepping up to the boy, I spoke to him about giving his heart to Jesus. The conductor of my train called, "All aboard," and Clinton left for the Northwest. I feel

confident that in the future, that rooster will crow for the Sunday-school work of the Publication Society.

Soon after this little occurrence, the missionary related the incident in Southern Minnesota. Shortly after returning from the southern trip, a letter was received, containing the following information:

"I send you by express, to-day, a rooster. It is not the one that boy on the train promised to raise for you; but I want him to crow loud and long for our Sunday-school missionary."

The following day, the expressman delivered, at the missionary's home, one of the most beautiful bantam roosters that ever crowed.

IN THE BIG WOODS.

FOR several days the missionary had been entertained in one of the most elegant homes in St. Paul. Everything that wealth could supply was found in that home. But a missionary could not live alway amid such splendor and delight.

The descent from such a mount of privilege to a frontier trip was not pleasant to contemplate. If variety is indeed the spice of life, this week revealed the inmost contents of the spice box.

The Saturday morning train out of St. Paul over the Manitoba road, was loaded with summer seekers for pleasure. As the train halted at Wayzata, the great steamers on Lake Minnetonka relieved it of several car-loads of human freight; the empty cars were side-tracked, to be returned full of passengers in the evening. It was hard to repress a longing to spend the Lord's Day at the beautiful lake; but mis-

sionaries must wait for their summer cottages at Minnetonka.

While the train stopped at the lake, a stylishly dressed gentleman approached the missionary as he stood upon the platform. It was the pastor of an eastern city church. Upon learning that the missionary was out for a short trip, he asked:

"Which way are you bound?"

The information being given, an invitation for him to accompany the missionary was extended. He at once accepted it; and, having sent word to his family, who were summering awhile at the lake, that he would return on Monday or Tuesday, he soon joined me—tall hat, white cravat, dress suit, and all.

As the train departed, I told him I knew nothing of the neighborhood into which we were going.

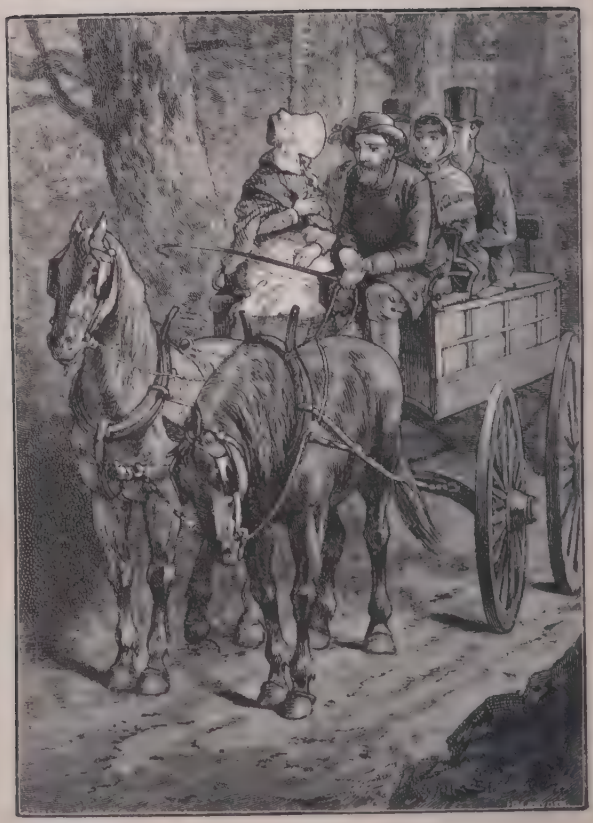
"A real western missionary experience will be a charming incident in my summer vacation," he said.

He was one of the most genial traveling companions I had ever met; and, during our three hours' ride on the cars, we became well acquainted.

The train stopped at the station, from which we were to drive eight or ten miles into the "big woods," a great forest in central Minnesota.

In the village was an almost defunct Baptist Church, which had starved to death on covetousness. After an indescribable dinner at the only hotel in the place, we began preparations for our trip into the woods. The Eastern Elder enjoyed this Western experience of getting such a dinner in such a place, and the hunting from house to house looking for a Baptist deacon, whose home, we had learned, was "somewhere in town." After an hour's search, we found him. He was not a model deacon, for he bore marks to the contrary, namely—two streams of tobacco juice trickling from the corners of his mouth. His butternut suit bore evidence that he was not the husband of one wife who had any pride in keeping the old man's garments repaired to the slightest degree. At first he "did not know as he cared to drive his team over sich roads as they hed after sich a rain-storm as hed fell the night afore."

While the Eastern pastor was strolling along the main street of the little Western town, the missionary made a little bargain with the deacon, by which he was bound to start in exactly half an hour for the "big woods" Baptist Church. This hiring of a Baptist deacon to take a general worker to a neighbor-



Spicy Breezes.

ing Baptist Church, was a new experience, and one over which the Eastern man laughed heartily. His glee was unbounded when he saw the conveyance in which we were to ride, and the team which was to be the motive power. A lumber wagon, the worse for wear, with no springs, and three hard boards for seats. The deacon had decided to take his wife and two girls, when the missionary informed him that the Eastern visitor was to preach two or three times for the people in the woods. He said he had "always hankered to hear some of them big guns from down East." The team had many fine points, some of them nearly showing through the hide.

The deacon, in his oddly shaped suit, perched upon the front seat, with clothes lines from his hands to the bits, his wife by his side, hidden behind and in her big white sun-bonnet; the two girls, silent and shy, on the middle seat, in high colored calicoes; the Eastern pastor, in Eastern suit, and Western missionary on the rear seat, made up a load not often seen in Eastern cities. The Elder enjoyed it amazingly. The small boys of the village feasted their eyes upon the departing load with as much gratification as on the recent circus.

"This experience is worth a trip of fifteen hundred miles," said the Elder, as a hill hid the railroad station from view.

Entering the woods, the roads became almost impassable; the men of the party having often to leave the wagon, to make the load light enough for the deacon's team to draw. The hot July air was nearly stifling, while swarms of mosquitoes and deer-flies fiercely attacked the human load, as well as tormented the horses to an almost unbearable degree. The Elder and missionary began a desperate defense, with handkerchiefs, which were flung back and forth about ears and necks, the favorite points of attack, by the blood-thirsty tormentors.

When about half the distance was accomplished, the Elder said:

"This is certainly an experience, with a vengeance attached to it. I never, in all my travels, saw such hungry flies and mosquitoes."

The missionary ventured the remark:

"If we don't get anything worse than this we shall be fortunate."

He wanted his traveling companion to be prepared for the worst.

The further we advanced into the woods, the more ravenous did the insects become. The poor horses were nearly frantic with their bleeding wounds made by the desperate deer-flies. Right glad were we when, at five o'clock, the little log school-house was reached.

The deacon sheltered his horses in the straw-covered stable of a neighbor living near by. The rest of the party entered the school-house, to find the church gathered for its monthly covenant-meeting.

The Elder opened his eyes to their widest capacity as he saw the congregation and pastor. Near a rough, board table stood the preacher, in his bare feet and shirt-sleves, spelling out the words in a little five-cent Testament, and preaching in "a holy tone" key to the eight or ten members present. After preaching about ten minutes longer, he welcomed the visitors, and asked for a few remarks. When he learned who the Elder was, he insisted upon an evening service, which should be conducted as the eastern visitor might say.

The strangers were to be entertained by the deacon of the church they were visiting. After being introduced to the other members, the deacon remarked:

"Agin the time we git home and do the chores, and walk back it will be meetin' time, and I reckon we'd better start." As we followed the deacon, he said: "The road is so awful bad that I 'lowed we'd better not take the team out, and I reckon we can stand a leetle walk; it ain't more'n two miles to my place."

The roads certainly could not be much worse for horses than for pedestrians. "Chuck holes" filled with water, dead leaves under the trees, wet as a soaked sponge; climbing over fallen trees to avoid the mud—made the two miles to the deacon's place seem more like seven. The long, weary walk ended; we came to our place of entertainment; when within twenty rods of the house, we were somewhat startled to see two great hogs hurry out of the front door; coming to the door we were not surprised that the hogs felt at home in such a place; for the floor might have been made much cleaner with a shovel and hoe.

The Elder suggested that we look over the farm for a little while, for the house was the most filthy place he had ever seen in which human beings tried to live; and so we stayed out of doors until called

to supper. Returning to the house, we were introduced to the deacon's wife and nine children, before entering the kitchen, where supper was served. It was a meal not soon to be forgotten.

The visitors were given seats of honor at the deacon's right and left; he called upon the Elder to ask a blessing; all heads were bowed while the Elder undertook one of the most difficult tasks of his ministry. When eyes were opened, it seemed as if a great black curtain had been let down to cover everything upon the table. The deacon drew out his hat, upon which he sat, and the curtain was immediately transformed into a cloud of flies; he then called two of the children to get branches from the trees and "fight those pesky flies." Zeb and Jerusha were evidently not adepts at fly-switching, as their movements were all vertical instead of horizontal; as a result, half a dozen flies found a watery grave in the Elder's cup of coffee. The host, discovering the disaster, immediately seized the cup, and poured its contents upon the floor beneath the table, saying:

"Maria, pour the Elder a decent cup of coffee."

When the tin cup was refilled, he said:

"Now, brethring, pitch in and help yourselves; and

don't be afeard the wittals will give out; there's lots more in the house."

In the centre of the table stood a large four-quart pan, filled with liquid grease, in the middle of which was a huge island of fat pork; unwashed potatoes, mashed before the skins had been removed; a great plate of old gold biscuits ornamented one end of the table (they had secured their old gold hue by a too liberal use of the saleratus box), heavy as lead, and of sufficient sharpness to nearly unroof the mouth; an earthen dish, filled with sauce made of ground cherries, dried apples, currants, blackberries, and unfortunate flies, was not calculated to tempt a man who was recruiting his health by a summer vacation.

This bill of fare, to be eaten from half-washed dishes, was not likely to satisfy even two ordinary men. Before leaving home, the missionary had called upon his physician, who had given him a little bottle of homœopathic remedy for dyspepsia, to be taken before eating very lightly; he was thankful for so good an excuse for not eating heartily, and remarked to the deacon, that his doctor had prescribed a light diet, for a few days. Immediately that Eastern brother saw an opportunity for a joke, and said:

"Deacon, don't let the Sunday-school missionary deceive you; for you need not be surprised if his little bottle contains one of the greatest of appetite sharpeners known to the medical world."

After that unkindest cut, the deacon and his family expected to see an enormous supper disappear. In order that the deacon might not be offended, the missionary ate far more than it was wise for him to do; but on the principle that "misery loves company," the missionary had a most sympathetic companion.

Supper being ended, seven from the deacon's house set forth on their march to meeting. The darkness made walking dangerous; but with the aid of a sad excuse for a lantern, the school house was reached. The Elder more than once wished for his rubber baptismal pants, for the ones he wore were utterly ruined. The meeting place was crowded to its utmost; unfortunately for people and preacher, the building was infested with fleas, which made it quite a lively meeting; the wriggling congregation writhed in agony. The Elder's sermon was very brief; and when concluded, he called upon the missionary to say a few words, which he did most emphatically, simply announcing that all who desired the organization of a

Sunday-school, might meet him at ten o'clock the following morning, which was Sunday.

The trip home was even worse than the going to meeting; the deacon led the way, followed by six weary travelers; those in the rear having very little light upon their pathway.

Arriving at the deacon's, the question of where we were to sleep, became a very serious one. Before a decision in the case was reached, all the family were summoned to evening devotions. On a wooden stand was a large, cheap family Bible, which the deacon handed the Elder. Immediately nine wide-open mouths, and as many pairs of eyes in a similar state, were indications that something new was about to occur. One little fellow of eight years ventured the information—"Tain't Sunday till to-morrow," and was reminded that silence was the order of the hour by a thump on the head. The lantern, which had been such a poor light to our path, was the only source of illumination in that home.

The Elder held the ponderous volume close to his face, the deacon stood holding the lantern close to the Elder's shoulder, so that he might have light upon the word. After reading and prayer, the deacon said:

"Now, children, off to bed, and don't let us hear no disturbance up stairs, or I'll come up and raw-hide yer."

The deacon seemed to think we needed a sample of how well he ruled his own house, having his children in subjection; for immediately eight pairs of feet, on five girls and three boys, were climbing the ladder leading to the loft overhead. The wife and baby went into the kitchen.

The deacon wanted to stay awhile and talk; but we were tired, and intimated that we should be glad to retire for the night. In a little while he said:

"Well, brethring, you can both sleep in that bed, I reckon, if it is a little narrer." And he pointed to the only bed we had seen in the house. The bed-clothes were filthy beyond description; but of course there was but one thing to be done—to wait for the deacon to leave us by ourselves. But instead of leaving, he said:

"I'll jest hold the light till you turn in, brethring."

There he stood with the lantern—half the globe gone, and its place supplied by a patch of brown paper. When in bed, the deacon left us with the kind wish:

"I hope you'll be rested up by mornin, and I wish you many happy dreams."

No sooner had the deacon and his light disappeared, than we made the discovery that we were occupying an inhabited bed; for the house contained many summer boarders, who wanted their meals at all hours—especially the night hours. The Elder was in continual torture; and that night's field of battle will never be erased from his memory. Not ten minutes' sleep did either of us have through the long hours of that memorable night. If Paul, on one of his missionary trips, "wished for day," it could not have been with a more intense desire than did we on this Minnesota missionary trip. The low growl of Tiger, the fierce watch-dog, who lay just outside our door, at every slight sound, warned us that seeking shelter outside was not the most desirable or safest thing. But all things have an end, and at last day came. We could not abide in that sleeping apartment another night, and the Elder said:

"We must get away from this place before to-morrow night, and you must make some sort of excuse. I would not spend another night like this for five hundred dollars."

The missionary said that he would plan to leave on Sunday afternoon for the station, so as to take the early train on Monday for Lake Minnetonka.

Just as day was breaking, a general row among the deacon's children occurred in the loft; and, in a little while, they came down from their lodging place, passing through the room where the visitors were. Taking advantage of a brief temporary absence of the intruders, we succeeded in rising and dressing. Soon after, we were called to breakfast, which was simply a duplicate of the supper.

At ten o'clock, we found in the school-house fifty-four persons of all ages, who were desirous of having a Sunday-school organized. The organization was effected, and at eleven o'clock the building was packed to repletion, so that the windows and door were filled with eager faces of those who could not get in. The Elder preached an admirable sermon, pointed and especially applicable to the congregation.

The whole settlement consisted of a class known during the war as "poor white trash." They had left the mountains of East Tennessee and West Virginia during the war and had settled as a colony in the big woods.

The man who preached to them was one of their own number, and, during the fourteen years he had been their pastor, had not received fifty dollars in money. During his pastorate, he had baptized nearly a hundred persons into the fellowship of the church "in the big woods."

Sunday afternoon, amid urgent invitations to "come again soon," we bade them a hearty farewell. The ride to the railroad station was a repetition of our experience the previous day.

An evening service was arranged in the village church, which would not hold all the people who wanted "to hear the down east preacher." The villagers were so delighted with the eloquent sermon that they united in asking him to stay and hold "a protracted meetin'."

Two happy men were passengers on the Monday morning train, as it left that Minnesota station. As the pastor and missionary parted by the shores of Minnetonka three hours later, the former said:

"One eastern church will increase its contributions this year for supporting a Society sending out missionaries who meet such experiences as we have had the past forty-eight hours 'in the big woods.'"

"GETTING THEIR EYES OPEN."

THE Association had adjourned for the dinner hour; a social chat was in progress between several brethren who had not met since the last annual gathering of that body. As the missionary approached the party, one of them asked:

"Well, Uncle Boston, what is the latest Baptist story?"

Why is it that general workers and traveling preachers are always expected to carry an assortment of incidents with which to regale the many people whom they may meet in their travels?

The question was asked by one of the men who are constanty talking of the delightfulness of Christian union, leaving principle entirely out of the question, and yielding to a sickly sentimentalism, which satisfies so many who appear to be unwilling to obey Christ and all his teachings.

Of course the missionary must relate an incident; so he said:

"Not long ago I heard of a minister who was making pastoral calls; at one of the homes a little girl of six years was sent to entertain the pastor, and to report that her mamma would be down in a few minutes. While talking with the entertaining little lady, an infant kitten of four days, which had been asleep in the corner, awoke, and in its blindness constantly came in contact with chair legs and other obstacles, and uttered a piteous cry.

The kind hearted pastor said to the little girl:

"Will you let me see your little kitten?"

At once the kitten was brought and placed in his hands, with the information:

"That's my Union kitty."

The visitor remarked upon the uncommon name. Just then the mother came into the room, and hearing the remark of her little girl, proceeded at once to relieve the pastor of his blind burden; for he did not know what to do with it.

Several weeks after, the pastor called again; during the visit he noticed a very playful kitten in the room, and at once asked the little girl:

"Is that your Union kitty?"

"No, sir; that's my Baptist kitty."

"Your Baptist kitty? Why, several weeks ago, you told me it was your Union kitty."

"It *was* then; but *its got its eyes open now.*"

On the way to the Association, the missionary had for a traveling companion a Baptist deacon, who was in trouble. Sitting in the same car seat, the following conversation occurred:

"Now, you are a Sunday-school missionary, and know all there is to be known about Sunday-school work, and I would——"

"Hold on, deacon," I interrupted.

"Why, what for?" hastily asked the good man.

"I want you to understand that Sunday-school missionaries do not know 'all there is to be known about Sunday-school work;' and you must not think they do, for you will find out your mistake many times, it may be. But go ahead with your remark, which I felt called for an interruption."

"Well, I and my wife are out-and-out Baptists, that you talk so much about; *we have been* these forty years, and we hain't surrendered our early education yet. We've been living in Minnesota nigh on to thirty

years. God has given us three boys and two girls, all grown up now, but *not one of 'em Baptists.* Now, what I'd like to know is, why they joined the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Congregational Churches?"

"Well, deacon, I don't know why they should, I am sure; but may I ask you a few questions?"

"Yes, sir, you may; and I'll answer them to the best of my ability."

"How long have you had a church here?"

"Oh, about twenty years."

"Were your boys and girls regular attendants at Sunday-school?"

"Regular as clock-work."

"Did they become Christians while members of the school?"

"Yes; every one of 'em."

"Did you say anything to them about the church of your choice?"

"Yes, sir; but Henry and Martha, the two oldest, stood up and said, with a vast deal of assurance: 'Why, pa, it don't make any difference which church we join, for all the churches are working for the same end, and there isn't any difference between the churches; and our teacher has again and again told

us that the Lord was just as much pleased with Christians in one church as another.' When I asked them if they were going to be baptized, they said, 'Of course, we are.' When I asked them who was going to administer the ordinance, they gave me the name of the Methodist Elder. *Then I was beat.* Then I asked them if it was to take place in the lake; they said: 'Why, no; we are to be baptized by pouring,' and then they both——"

"Wait a moment, deacon, and let me ask you another question. *Do you have such teaching in your school?*"

"Why, no," said the deacon. "I don't think we do"—then, thinking for an instant, the old gentleman added: "Well, come to think about it, the teacher of the young people's class *is a Methodist.*"

"Why," said I, "that is something remarkable, that a Methodist should be teaching in a Baptist Sunday-school. Isn't it?"

"Oh, ours is a Union school, and has been for years; in fact, ever since it was organized."

"Do they use Baptist literature in your Union school?"

"Well," said the deacon, "Sunday-school mission-

aries don't know everything about Sunday-school work, if they think a Union school will ever use Baptist literature"—and the old man chuckled quite cheerily, to think of such a question being asked by a Baptist Sunday-school missionary.

"I told you, you would see your mistake, if you thought we knew everything about this Sunday-school work, you know"—taking from my pocket a popular teachers' help.

The deacon noticed my movement, and said:

"Why, all the teachers of our school take that paper."

I carefully opened it to the lesson of "The Passover."

The good man, thinking I wished to change the subject, said:

"You haven't yet told me why my children are not Baptists."

"Well, deacon, perhaps I cannot tell you; but from what you have told me, I judge your children have been told by their teacher, that 'baptism is a mere form,' and that it makes no difference which 'form of baptism' is administered. I read, some time ago, this note in one of the so-called undenomina-

tional helps: 'When Jesus was baptized he chose the mode he preferred; and so he allows his followers to choose the form of baptism which they prefer.' Now, is that contrary to Baptist doctrine?"

"I should think it was; and that is just what my John and Martha said about choosing the form they liked best."

"Well, deacon, if our boys and girls are taught such errors by their teachers, and led to accept them as truth, what is your idea about the importance of every Baptist church having its own school?"

"It's only when the lessons are upon baptism that these Union Helps teach such error — isn't it?" asked the deacon.

I then read from the teachers' help I had taken from my pocket, and among the notes of one of the most prominent men of the East, the following in connection with the preparation of the Passover:

"*It is well for us, once for all, to know that it is the spirit and purpose of an ordinance, and not the mere form, that God honors.*"

"Let me see that," said the old man, eagerly.

I handed him the paper from which I had read. After a few minutes of serious thought, he said:

"Is it possible that I have been so blind all these years? Now, I really felt that we must have a Union Sunday-school, because the churches in our neighborhood were so weak; and then I was afraid, if I said anything about a Baptist school, it would be unkind and uncharitable to my neighbors; and in my regard for other people's feelings and opinions, I now see that my children are taught error and carelessness concerning the plain teachings of him whom we call Master, and whom we profess *to obey in all things.*"

Before the Association adjourned, the deacon took the missionary's hand in his iron grasp, and said:

"Just as soon as possible we want you to come to our church, and we'll organize a Baptist Sunday-school. You have taken the right ground in saying that where there is strength for a Baptist church there is strength for a Baptist Sunday-school, and Baptists cannot afford to use undenominational literature at any price. Our new pastor is coming next week, and you may expect a letter from him or me, as soon as we talk matters over. The Lord bless you in your work. But it has taken me a long while to get my eyes open."

MID-SUMMER MISSION WORK.

THE rain tumbled in torrents, as if determined to dissuade us from starting on our twenty mile ride, in an open wagon, over the prairies, and through the woods of S. County. We paid no attention to the pouring, as we were Baptists, intent on Baptist business.

A few weeks before, the following letter was received:

"MY DEAR BROTHER:

"When can you arrange to visit F.? We would be glad to have you come and spend a Lord's Day with us, and give us a real 'setting up' in Sunday-school matters. We want a Baptist Sunday-school. A school has been run here for years under a sort of disunion policy. We want your advice and help about organizing a Baptist school. We want to organize a similar school at M."

This letter brought the Elder, who had written it,

to the railroad station to meet the Sunday-school missionary, who was to render the aid asked for. During our rainy ride the Elder said:

"Both the churches I wrote about are becoming tired of being unequally yoked together with Methodists and Disciples in a Union Sunday-school."

"How long have they had a Union school?" asked the missionary.

"These churches were organized in '58 and '59; and in order to *reach all the people*, they allowed their schools to be made 'Union affairs.'"

"Have you spoken to your people upon the importance of every church doing its own Sunday-school work?"

"Yes; but they said, when I first came here, that as the Methodists and Disciples came in and helped by their support, they would withdraw if we organized a Baptist Sunday-school."

"In your letter you said your two churches wanted Baptist schools. How has this been brought about?"

"Oh, they have been converted from the error of their ways, for they began to see how the Disciples steadily gained ground. One of their number had become superintendent of the schools; and measures

were taken to secure a Disciple preacher to occupy the pulpits. Great fear was upon all Baptists that the Disciples were arranging matters about as they pleased. These proceedings opened the eyes of the two churches. They soon extended me a call, which I accepted."

"Are all your people in sympathy with you in this effort to establish an out-and-out Baptist school?"

Nearly all of them feel that it ought to be done, but some are fearful that it may cause trouble in the village, and prejudice people against the Baptists. I told them what you said at the Association, that 'where there is strength for the organization of a Baptist church there is strength for a Baptist Sunday-school'; and so they all thought; and desired me to invite you to come and assist us."

The rain continued to fall during the entire drive of twenty miles, so that when the Elder's home was reached, our clothing was thoroughly drenched. After a refreshing cup of tea, at eight o'clock, we retired for the night. By morning our clothing was dried, and our work for that beautiful Sunday in July commenced.

At half-past ten o'clock, the village church was filled with an expectant congregation; for all had learned of the coming of the missionary, and of the mission to be accomplished.

After a short sermon on the need of Christian living, the missionary delivered an address on the "Importance of Doing Denominational Work." When the address was finished, the Disciple superintendent said:

"From the speaker's remarks, this morning, I should judge that I am not the one to be superintendent of the school which meets here. I, therefore, tender my resignation, to take effect at once."

The missionary closed the meeting; requesting all who were interested in the organization of a Baptist school, to remain. Some feeling was shown on the part of the other denominations—as is likely to be the case on such occasions. Of the one hundred and fifty present, all but sixteen Baptists left the room, which caused one fearful brother to say:

"There, Brother Smith; I was afraid it would be a mistake."

The superintendent's resignation was accepted, and a vote taken, after prayer for direction, to organize

a Baptist Sunday-school. The result was the election of an out-and-out Baptist for superintendent, and the choice of other officers and teachers who were all Baptists. At the completion of the organization, one of the deacons seized the missionary's hand and said:

"This ought to have been done just twenty-five years ago; and now that it is done, we'll continue it as a Baptist institution, if we don't have more than three in our school."

All the requisites for a Baptist school were ordered, and all were anxious to have it succeed. The missionary addressed the new school on "The True Foundation for Baptist Sunday-school Work," after which the good deacon wanted all to join in singing "How firm a foundation."

After dinner we drove to M ——, a distance of six miles, over bad roads, and in the scorching heat of the July sun. Here also the Baptists were ready to drop Union work, for it had been most unsatisfactory. To the delight of faithful hearts, a Baptist school was organized. At this place a good Methodist brother said:

"I am a Methodist, clear to the back-bone, but have felt for a long time that this Union school we

have had has amounted to very little; for no denomination has felt any responsibility for the maintenance of the school, and I am sure that as our Baptist friends have taken it under their care and protection, it will be conducted in a much more satisfactory manner, than when it was a child with no parents. For one, I am glad this action has been taken; and I shall attend this Baptist school until the Methodists have strength to sustain a school of their own; then I shall go with them."

In the evening we returned to F——. A children's service for the boys and girls, and a Bible reading for the older people, finished the "day's work for Jesus." Three sermons, six addresses, and the organization of two Baptist Sunday-schools, was sufficient to cause a feeling of weariness to the missionary. The little church at F—— began immediately the erection of a parsonage, which was soon the home of a pastor much loved by his people.

On arriving home, the missionary received a note from head-quarters, bearing the instruction: "*By all means* take the rest proposed and needed. Rest awhile. It will pay."

The following week, the missionary was spending

Sunday with a deacon of one of the smaller country churches. The matter of a vacation was referred to. Said the missionary:

"Yes, deacon, I have not had a vacation for four years."

The good man had not seen the missionary for two and a half years, and thought only of his improved physique, the result of Minnesota appetite and bracing air. The deacon was in the habit of riding on the cars once a year, as he went back and forth to the State Fair. This annual excursion was, perhaps, the most stirring and enjoyable event of the whole year, to the good man. As he looked the missionary over from head to foot, he said:

"I don't exactly see why you need a vacation; you're going from place to place, all the time, and have a grand opportunity for seeing our wonderful State; then, too, your health seems to be perfect. I really believe you weigh forty pounds heavier than when I saw you last. I certainly do not see what more of a vacation you need than you are having all the time."

"Yes, deacon, 'tis true I am going from place to place, and have traveled about forty thousand miles

since I last saw you; my wife, and Mabel, and Bess, all 'wish somebody would do some of papa's traveling, and give them a chance to get acquainted with him.'"

The deacon seems a little thoughtful, and is silent.

Three full services were given to the little frontier church—morning, afternoon, and evening; for they have no pastor. The missionary conducted the only public religious services they had had for six months. At the close of the third service, a deep-seated feeling of weariness had taken possession of the speaker; the day's duties, combined with the incessant labor consequent upon a three days' Institute preceding the Sunday services, found the missionary almost a physical wreck. Even the deacon's spare bed could not induce sleep. Monday morning it was difficult to muster strength for the ten mile drive over the prairie, under the burning rays of the summer sun. But the delightful prairie breeze, which soon sprang up, was highly refreshing. When the station was reached, he felt able to fill his next appointment. On the train was a good sister, who instantly recognized the missionary.

"Why, Brother Smith, are you sick? I never saw you looking so worn and tired."

"Yes, auntie, a little weary, that's all."

"Do you not remember the words of the Saviour to his tired workers, 'Come ye yourselves apart into a desert place, and rest awhile?'"

That sounded just like Auntie Carr; for God's word was a practical book to her.

"Yes, and I wish it were possible to get to a place where I might not think of a sermon, an address, or an institute, for two whole weeks."

"Then I have a suggestion. I want you to bring your wife and children—for I know it would rest you to be near them—out to our house. We will give you two rooms, all you can eat; you shall sleep as much as you want; ride when you feel like it; go fishing or boating on our splendid lake; have all the milk you can drink; and *do nothing just as hard as you please.*"

The Lord bless his thoughtful children and reward them. All we can say is: "*Inasmuch.*"

On his arrival home the last of the week, the missionary thought within himself to make preparations for a two week's vacation, during which he would

rest awhile. As he looked over the mail delivered during his absence, five-year-old Mabel found mamma, who was busy about her morning work, and said:

"I'd like to know if *my* papa must go to writing letters as soon as he gets home—but he *did* give me *one good swing* before he began writing."

Here are some extracts from the letters opened.

"We have been looking for you for three months. Can you not come and see us Sunday after next?"

"Our boys and girls are afraid 'Uncle Boston' has forgotten them—you haven't been to see us for two years."

"We are tired of our Union Sunday-school, and want you to organize an out-and-out Baptist school."

"You promised to hold an Institute this summer. Can you come in two weeks?"

"Three of my class are to be baptized next Sunday, and are anxious that you should be present."

These midsummer calls, and others like them, made it necessary for the missionary to decline Auntie Carr's kind invitation; and, after a few days' rest, the needed work was entered upon, and the summer days filled with labors for the Master.

AUTUMN GALES.

Spicy Breezes.

A RIDE WITH A DEACON.

AS the afternoon train on the Northern Pacific Railroad stopped at the station, the missionary looked for the deacon, who had written a postal, saying:

"I'll be at the depot Saturday afternoon, if Providence permits."

Never having seen the man, it was difficult to tell which one of all the crowd that congregated to see the cars pass, was the deacon.

Taking a seat in the waiting-room, I took *The Baptist Teacher* from my satchel, and had just opened it when a middle aged man stepped into the room and inquired:

"Be you 'Uncle Boston'?"

I informed him that was what the boys and girls called me.

"Well," said he, "I rushed up to that old gentleman with a white beard and gray hair, who got

off the train with you young fellows, and he looked at me as if he thought I was insane. He said he guessed I must be mistaken in my man. But I wasn't looking for such a young man as you be."

I told him I supposed his mistake would help him not to forget the Sunday-school missionary; and then he led the way to a hitching post, to which was attached the horse and "one-horse shay," for we were to have a long ride over the prairie together.

The only ears beside our own hearing the conversation were those belonging to "old Neddy;" and, from his continually turning them toward us, he must have been much interested in what we were saying. I venture the first remark:

"So the Elder has resigned."

"Yes," said the deacon; "we couldn't raise enough money for him."

"What's the trouble?"

"*Oh, we're all poor on this prairie.*"

Just then we came to a farmer leaning over the fence. His question to the deacon was:

"What's wheat worth at the station to-day?"

"*Dollar and a quarter for number two,*" answered the deacon.

After a few questions concerning their stock, corn, oats, and other things, the easy-going horse was exhorted to "Get up."

I asked, resuming our conversation: "Have you a pretty good wheat crop this year, deacon?"

"Yes, a very fair crop; about twenty-five bushels to the acre."

I then carefully put the question:

"You haven't used all your land for wheat, have you?"

"Oh, no! I put in sixty in wheat, and the rest in oats and corn."

I again carefully inquired:

"Are most of the members of your church farmers?" and quietly took my memorandum book and pencil from my pocket.

"Yes, they are mostly farmers. There's Brother C., who keeps the village store, and Brother A., who owns the mill, and several others, who are not farmers."

I jotted down the deacon's sixty acres of wheat, with twenty five bushels to the acre, and soon figured the amount of money he would receive for his wheat alone, and found it amounted to $1,875.

I then asked the deacon if he knew about how many acres of wheat his neighbors had; and learned that Brother D. had eighty, Brother E. seventy-five, Brother F. one hundred, Brother G. sixty, Brother H. ninety, Brother I. one hundred and twenty, Brother J. seventy-five, Brother K. eighty, and Brother L. sixty.

"Is that a high or low estimate?" I asked, shutting up my book and placing it in my pocket.

"Well, I think I am safe in saying it is about right; but," added the deacon, "tell me what you put down those figures for in that little book you've just hid away in your pocket."

"Oh," I replied, "I am just getting a few notes for my sermon to-morrow."

"That answer is not one bit satisfactory. I want you to tell me what you wanted those figures for."

"Just wait a minute, deacon," I said, "and tell me who gave the sunshine, and rain, and such favorable weather for the wheat crop?"

"Why, the Giver of all good things, of course," he replied.

"Well, deacon, do you know what the promise is that secures well-filled barns?"

He could not call it to mind, just then. So, opening my Bible to the third chapter of Proverbs, and ninth verse, I read, as emphatically as I could: "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the *first fruits* of all thine increase; *so* shall thy barns be filled with plenty"—and quietly asked:

"Deacon, do you know the Lord has many children who read that *last fruits*, instead of *first fruits?*"

No answer, but after a little meditation, he asked:

"Well, how much ought a Christian to give, anyway?"

I said to the good man:

"Suppose when I reach your house, I take ten oranges from my satchel, and say to your youngest daughter: 'Here, Edna, are ten oranges. I want you to give one back to me.' Now, what would you do if Edna refused to give me the one orange?"

"Why, I'd whip her if she didn't come straight to you, and give you the largest one of all."

"Now, deacon, do you think our Heavenly Father has any children who need to be whipped, for not giving him at least *one tenth* of all he gives them in this world?"

"It does seem as if every child of God ought to be

willing to give at least *a tenth*, but *they won't do it*—" and the good man said the closing words with truthful emphasis.

"How long is it since the grasshoppers destroyed so much grain?"

"Five years ago, not a grain of wheat was harvested on this prairie, and we were brought almost to starvation."

"Do you suppose that plague was sent to show the people on this prairie that they had been robbing God?"

"I never had thought of it in that light; but it may have been a judgment upon us."

"Now, deacon, I will tell you why I put down those figures you so willingly gave concerning the wheat crop of your so-called poverty stricken church," and took my memorandum book from my pocket. "I have not asked about the crops of corn, oats, potatoes, nor of the stock raised by these ten members of your church. Let the profits on them pay all the expenses of raising the wheat crop, though you see that step is robbing the Lord of the *first fruits*. Nothing has been said about the income of the other thirty members of your church. The number of

acres of wheat planted by these ten members is eight hundred. You say the average number of bushels to the acre is, at least, twenty-five; that makes twenty thousand bushels; and the price of wheat at the station to which this wheat will be hauled in the next two weeks is one dollar and twenty-five cents, with a prospect of going higher. Now, that makes the amount of money which will come into the possession of these ten members the nice little sum of *twenty-five thousand dollars;* and if they paid the Lord his tenth, your church treasury would have in it twenty-five hundred dollars, with which to pay a 'number one' pastor, and make liberal contributions to all our benevolent societies."

"Old Neddy" turned into the roadway leading up to the well managed farm of the deacon, who remarked, as he took the missionary's satchel from the "shay":

"Figures are awful stubborn things; and your mathematical calculations shows very plainly that we are not so poor as we sometimes like to make ourselves out to be. But let us go in and see if wife has that big pitcher of milk ready for the Sunday-school missionary."

THE DARK HOUR.

TO many a Western frontier church there comes the dark hour—a time when people fear that a mistake was made in organizing a church at such a point.

Several years before, there had been found in the new railroad town sufficient material for the organization of a Baptist Church. But as the railroad pushed further west, the spirit of unrest prevailing to so large an extent in many Western towns had brought about so many removals, that the membership of the little church was almost entirely depleted.

At the commencement of the history of the little church, they had secured the services of a most excellent pastor from an Eastern State. He was looked upon in the community with great respect, even by the non-church-going townspeople. He faithfully preached the word, and souls were saved.

A little meeting-house had been enclosed, though

far from completed, when the much-loved pastor was compelled to give up the work because of failing health. All the membership save one earnest devoted woman had removed from the place.

To the annual meeting of the Association, with a church about twelve miles distant, went the only remaining member, with a faint hope that something might be done to save the little church for which she had labored and prayed so earnestly.

The letters from churches composing the Association, were being read. When that of G—— was called, a lady of refinement and culture addressed the Moderator of the meeting:

"I have come to the Association as the only living member of the Baptist Church in G——. Constant removals and the failure of our pastor's health, have brought our little church to its present condition. With the kindly aid of one of the teachers in our public schools, who is not a professing Christian, a little Sunday-school has been maintained; this is the only service conducted in the name of the Baptist Church of G——. Good seed has been planted in the years passed, and I feel sure the harvest will be gathered, and the Baptist cause see brighter days.

I ask your prayers and counsel concerning strengthening what remains."

The earnest words from such a warm Christian heart stirred deep feeling in the hearts of all present; and at once a season of prayer followed, for God's blessing on the seed sown, and the faithfulness of this one member, whose one desire was the progress of Christ's kingdom.

All through the sessions of the Association this request for prayer was remembered, the Spirit teaching the brethren and sisters what things they should pray for, and all assured the sister from G——. that her faithfulness to duty would be rewarded. A mighty faith seemed to possess all who prayed.

The Association was held over Sunday, and was a rich feast to many who had not been in a Baptist meeting for a whole year.

Monday morning, the missionary, on the way to his next appointment, took the same train that was to bear this Baptist lady to her home. Arrangements were made for him to make an early visit to G——, in order to encourage the little Sunday-school, so faithfully conducted by the only remaining member of the little church.

While anticipating the pleasure of meeting the little school, and two days before the missionary was to leave to fill the appointment, a letter was received from the lady's husband, telling of his wife's serious illness, and asking, at her request, that the proposed visit be postponed. The following week word came that the lady had gone to her reward. A neighboring Baptist pastor officiated at the funeral. It was held in the little, half-finished meeting-house, which had been made ready for this last sad service. Surely the darkest hour had come, to close the history of this little church, planted only three years before.

A church of another denomination had made efforts to secure the unfinished edifice, that they might complete it for their own use. As the funeral procession was passing from the building, a member of the other denomination remarked to a companion:

"That is the last service the Baptists will ever hold in this building. *We* shall now secure the house, and at once proceed to fit it up."

Among those in attendance at the funeral was a white-haired man of sixty years; but remarkably active, and apparently in the vigor of manhood. He had come all the way from Maine, to see his

much-loved daughter before she should be called up higher. He was a deacon in one of the oldest churches in his native State. His quick ear caught the remark concerning "the last Baptist service," and he could not dislodge it from his mind.

When the body was laid away in its last resting place, and all had returned to their homes, the father sat with the motherless children of his daughter, whose husband was not a Christian. His heart was burdened to think how his beautiful grandchildren would miss the Christian training of the mother taken from them, just at the time they needed her so much. But the old man had a firm faith, really believing in God's promise to care for the little ones.

As the deacon thought of his daughter's life in the West, and the many urgent letters received of late, to make his home with her, largely to aid her in keeping the little church alive, he felt sure the Lord would honor the faith of the departed. A conviction that God had sent him from Maine to Minnesota, to take up the work laid down by his daughter, kept deepening. The conviction soon ripened into action.

The day following the funeral, the deacon began calling from house to house, to learn if there were

any persons who were, or had been Baptists, before coming to make Y—— their home. Though at first he found none of those that he searched for, every one spoke in kindest terms of his daughter, and her consistent Christian life in the community.

At one home where he called, a man and his wife had a few weeks before moved into the village, both Baptists; they received the deacon with the utmost cordiality, expressing a willingness to do all in their power to keep the Baptist name alive in the place. After calling through the village, he went out into the country, and after two weeks found seven persons who were willing to enter into a church organization.

A subscription was started in the village, for the purpose of securing funds with which to complete the unfinished meeting-house. Owing to the pleasant memory of the deacon's daughter, liberal amounts were subscribed by the citizens generally.

The deacon at once set to work with his own hands to push forward the work on the building, so that public service might be held as soon as possible. Other men cheerfully aided in the work.

The Associational missionary was sent for, and, in company with the Sunday-school missionary, called

a meeting, at which seven names were given of those who wished a church organized. The deacon had sent to Maine for his letter, determined to have a church home as long as he remained in the West. The Baptist Church of G—— was reorganized, to the delight of all Baptists who could be found.

With a loan from the Home Mission Society, the building was sufficiently finished so that the missionaries could remain for a series of meetings. Large congregations attended the gospel services, and souls were saved. The good deacon was in his element, and many a sin-blinded soul was brought into the light by his earnest pleadings and prayers. The whole town was moved, many refusing to attend the meetings lest they should hear and be converted.

The little church soon numbered twenty members, and as the missionaries could tarry but a little while, the church began praying for a pastor who should come to feed them and win lost souls.

A note was sent to *The Standard*, at Chicago, telling of the condition of the field, and urging some Eastern pastor to investigate Western needs.

A young man had just completed his course in one of our theological seminaries. As he glanced over

notes from the Western States, his eye fell upon that concerning G. He read it several times, and, with each reading, he felt more drawn to open correspondence with the Minnesota church. He was invited to the dedication of the completed little church; he was much impressed with the earnestness and desire for work on the part of the members; he preached several times; the church gave him a unanimous call; he accepted. In two years the membership increased to seventy-five; and the church is now the strongest in the Association, and is constantly growing under the earnest leadership of the faithful pastor.

The deacon still remains in the West; and nearly every church in the Association is stronger for the visits he has been making since he came. The good man's favorite verses are: "The Lord is nigh unto all that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth. He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him; he also will hear their cry, and will save them."

Brighter days have come to G.; and as the little Baptist Church looks back to "the dark hour" in their history, they rejoice that one woman stood up for God's truth, and many already "arise to call her blessed."

A SUNDAY-SCHOOL IN A CAR.

THE first frost had come, and with it the question: "What can be done for our Sunday-school? It cannot be held out of doors any longer."

It was no laughing matter to our superintendent. He felt that the school ought to continue through the winter. In the new Minnesota town, all the inhabitants were living in the smallest of rooms in their humble homes, not one of them large enough to accommodate the Sunday-school.

The superintendent was a man who was afflicted with homesickness, if a week passed and he was denied the pleasure of meeting the boys and girls for Bible study on Sunday. His own little store was so crowded with goods, that no room in it could possibly be made for the school. Not a hall, or even a schoolhouse, had been built; and it seemed as if the Sunday-school must close for the winter.

A less determined man would have given up, with

the discouraged ones' lament: "It is of no use trying to keep up the school." He could not be satisfied to have only his own family gathered on Sunday afternoon, for Bible study, and all the children of the neighborhood running wild; for he was about the only Christian man in the new town. More than once had he been threatened for speaking out on the temperance question, for he believed it should have a place in every Sunday-school; he had succeeded in getting many of the boys and girls to sign the pledge. He had exposed the saloons of the place, many times; showing by facts and figures the enormous amount expended for the deadly stuff, by their own little town. Several attempts had been made to drive him from the place; many an insult had been given to himself and family; but he still kept on, rebuking evil as opportunity offered; threatening letters were written, and finally his store was set on fire by those against whom he had taken such a stand.

He had seen what a hold he had upon the boys, by introducing the pledge among them. One of the bright lads of his school had, a few weeks before, gone out with a hunting party from the village, composed of men who indulged freely in the use of liquor.

In the wagon in which the party had gone, was placed a beer-keg filled with water, for their use in preparing their food, also for those whose thirst could be satisfied with the drink which God has given. Our little hero became thirsty, after being out a few hours, and was offered a drink from the keg, but refused, on the ground that the water must be tainted by being in such a place. Of course they laughed at the little fellow for being so scrupulous; but he dared to do right, and persistently refused to drink from one of King Alcohol's reservoirs. His thirst became almost unbearable, during the long, hot hours of that August day. But he refrained from satisfying it until the hunting party returned to the village. Then he drank of heaven's sweet drink, and rejoiced to report to his superintendent that he had kept his pledge. This boy's keen perception of the sacredness of his pledge, preached to the young men the most powerful temperance sermon to which they ever listened. To this day, that boy's steadfastness is remembered by the men in that party, though all of them are low, drunken men, apparently beyond hope of reformation; and they will tell you to-day that, had they had such temperance taught them in their youthful days, they

might now be men filling high places of confidence and honor.

A knowledge of these facts, and others equally significant, made the superintendent very solicitous as to the closing of their school for the winter. He knows how active Satan is, every day of the year. But with no church, no school-house, no hall, and no room large enough to gather a company for Sunday-school purposes, what could be done?

It was made a special subject of prayer around his family altar; and they felt sure that, in some way or other, the Lord would provide. He thought of the waiting-room of the rail-road station; but that was so small and filthy that he could not ask the children to gather in such a place. After considering the question for several days—holding fast to his early conviction, that "where there's a will there's a way"—he decided upon one more effort. He addressed a letter to the Division Superintendent of the railroad running through their town, asking that every Saturday night a passenger coach might be side-tracked at the station as the night express passed, and taken on by the early Monday morning train on its return trip. He waited anxiously for a reply, for he

well knew the uncertainty as to whether such corporations would be disposed to grant such favors; but when the answer came, the request was very cheerfully granted.

The following Saturday night the coach was left upon the side-track, near the great elevator. The novelty of having Sunday-school in a railway coach was a great attraction to the people of the new town. Sunday afternoon there gathered the largest school ever held in that village. The school was continued without intermission every Sunday, with the exception of two Sundays when the Saturday night express was "snowed in" before reaching the station.

The winter meetings in the coach were blessed to the strengthening of Christians, and the winning of souls for Christ among the boys and girls.

With the return of spring came the booming period of the new town; large business blocks were erected, a school-house was built, and to-day the Sunday-school held in the railway coach is grown into a live, stirring Baptist Church, with a neat house of worship.

"THIS GRACE ALSO."

THE mill whistles of Minneapolis had sounded the morning summons to thousands of men, women, and children; all hastened to their places of employment in the many manufacturing establishments about the Falls of St. Anthony.

A visit to the milling district had been planned for the entertainment of a visiting brother. Only a few of the leading mills could be visited in the limited time at our disposal. The largest flouring mill in the world was a source of constant remark; the system and method found within its walls impressed the visitors. Said one of them:

"What improvements in milling have been made since I used to go to mill with father! Just think of one mill turning out nearly six thousand barrels of flour a day!"

And being a man who finds illustrations and lessons in every-day life, he added:

"If our churches, with a view to accomplish as much in winning souls for Christ, were organized as carefully as these mills are for producing flour and lumber, what progress toward the evangelization of the world might be made in a single year! Think of the grand opportunities before all our benevolent organizations, and their inability to take advantage of them, because so many Baptists are idolaters; for our guide book says, 'covetousness is idolatry.' I sometimes wonder that professing Christians can allow themselves to be so fearfully blinded by the god of this world."

Another member of the party responded:

"The old mill of your father's day served its purpose; but when the wheat fields of the Northwest were opened up, the great mills we have visited, and others like them, were needed. How little would be accomplished if only the mills of fifty years ago were in existence! So I think the membership of Christian churches are too easily satisfied with giving as their fathers gave, many of them thinking one dollar a year enough, when they should give at least twenty-five to all our missionary organizations. The serious question is, how are the church members to be made

to see that they are guilty of robbing God? It cannot be that enough has not been written upon the subject; and I am persuaded that the convictions on the subject of giving, far outnumber the conversions; so many have formed their life-habits in this matter, that the moment a word is said about giving money for the evangelization of the world, at home and abroad, that moment the worst side of the average church member is seen; but he can find money enough to secure any selfish gratification."

The missionary was then appealed to:

"What, in your opinion, is the remedy for this sad state of affairs in Christian churches?"

"I have been much interested in the lessons suggested by the visit to the mills; there we find system in every department, and, as a consequence, large incomes to the owners. When our churches *adopt a system of giving, and run it* as faithfully as these mills are operated, we shall see Christ's kingdom so rapidly advanced that we should all be——"

"Yes," interrupted one of the party, "but is it possible to educate our present membership?"

As the one questioned hesitated in answering, the questioner added:

"I think our ministers ought to give them no rest, but get just as much money as possible from them. I firmly believe many ministers are to blame for not presenting the claims of all our missionary organizations."

The missionary then said:

"The solution of this problem may be found in training the rising generation in our Sunday-schools." Taking from his pocket a printed slip, he added: "When you have leisure to read that, you will find my idea of training in benevolence."

The slip was carefully placed, with other papers, in the visiting brother's pocket; but not to share the fate of so many tracts and articles on so important a subject; for, as he sat upon the veranda of the missionary's home, awaiting the dinner hour, he took from his pocket the clipping referred to. He read:

"It is the first Sunday in the month. The Sunday-school superintendent has *taken the trouble* to get a large map of the world, which hangs before the school. The business of the session has been transacted. The superintendent then says:

"'To-day is our collection for Foreign Missions; let us trace on the map where our money is going.'

"Then, with pointer, the route is followed to the Rooms of the Missionary Union, where the pupils are introduced to the leading officers of the Society. Thence across the ocean, to one of the mission fields. One or two brief items of intelligence from the Telugu Mission, or of the work in China, are given. The collection is taken. Very few pennies are found in the box; but dimes, quarters, and halves are plentiful. Why? The wise superintendent *has shown* the pupils where their offerings go; and they have an intelligent idea of what Foreign Missions means.

"On another first Sunday in the month, they are further informed as to the work of the Missionary Union; other missionary fields and stations are made familiar to them.

"If you will hasten your steps, you may overtake those two bright boys, and also overhear their conversation on their way home.

"'Why, Harry,' says one, 'I don't believe I can ever open my atlas to the map of Asia, without thinking 'there's where the money goes that I give to Foreign Missions.'

"'Yes, Fred, and I shall never look at China without thinking of the work Miss Fielde is doing

there. I'd like to see that lady, wouldn't you? I wonder what she looks like?'

"'Say, Harry, my teacher says she has the photographs of a lot of missionaries, and I'm going to ask her to let me see 'em.'

"'Well, Fred, when a fellow thinks of those millions of heathen, and the few missionaries, it makes him feel as if he wanted to earn a pile of money *to help to send more missionaries*—don't it?"

"'Yes, sir, and I'm going to put in more than a nickel next month, sure as I live.'

"These lads are only samples of many other pupils in that school, who are becoming more and more interested in foreign missions. The older they grow, the more intelligent they are; and as they come to years of maturity, and God prospers them in this world's goods, they will give accordingly.

"The second Sunday of the month the superintendent *has again taken the trouble* to hang before the school a map of North America. Above it is the inspiring motto: '*North America for Christ.*'

"Just before time for the collection the superintendent says:

"'To-day we bring our offerings for the American

Baptist Home Mission Society, whose work is to establish churches and sustain missionaries in destitute regions of our own land. When *our* church was organized, it was supported by the liberality of the Home Mission Society.'

"He then points to the Western and Northwestern portions of the United States, telling of the grand work done in past years, and what is now being done. He then speaks of the Society's schools among the Freedmen of the South, giving briefly a few incidents from the field. The school is much interested.

"On other second Sundays in the month, just previous to the collection, in a three-minute talk, the wise superintendent gives them much information on other departments of the work of the Home Mission Society.

"This Sunday we overtake two young ladies, and this is the manner of their conversation:

"'Say, Nell, didn't you feel as if you'd like to be a teacher in some of those schools for Freedmen in the South, while Mr. M. was telling what the Home Mission Society is doing for the colored people?'

"'Yes, Carrie, I did think that very thing; and if I thought I should ever be called to such a work as that being done by Miss J. P. Moore, I'd be the happiest girl in the world, and would begin at once to fit myself for it.'

"These young ladies are among the number of whom many are accustomed to say:

"'They care for nothing but dress and amusement.' Yet they had that day been aroused to interest themselves for the first time in the missionary work of one of our great Societies. Many others of the school become much interested, and consequently willing helpers by their offerings.

"The third Sunday in the month the superintendent *has again taken the trouble* to bring, in addition to the map of North America, a large map of the United States. Previous to receiving the offerings that day, the superintendent says:

"'The Society which makes and sells the quarterlies, papers, and library books for our schools, is doing a grand missionary work. The American Baptist Publication Society is our National Sunday-school Society, and is sending Sunday-school missionaries into all the States of our Union. Their work

is to help the schools already organized to become better schools. I believe our teachers are all better prepared to teach since attending the Sunday-school Institute conducted by our Sunday-school missionary last month. The boys and girls will not soon forget the sermon he preached especially for them; his heart longs to see them brought to Jesus in their youth. These missionaries also go into destitute neighborhoods and organize new schools; they have already organized *six thousand new schools.* Our Sunday-school Society also sends good men called colporteurs, with Bibles, books, and papers, into neighborhoods where people never go to church; and by visiting from house to house they reach many thousands who would never otherwise have the gospel preached to them. These colporteurs are doing a great and good work. Besides all this, our Society helps, by donations, many poor schools, who cannot afford to buy what they need. Surely we ought to give cheerfully to a Society seeking to give God's word to every man, woman, and child in America; and which aims to win the boys and girls for Christ."

"So every third Sunday in the month the wise superintendent, in a few words, gives to his school

items of interest concerning the work of our Publication Society. What say the boys and girls of this school about the work of our Sunday-school Society?

"'Say, Dick, did you think our Publication Society was doing the kind of work our superintendent told us about?'

"'Why no, Bert; I thought it was a Society of rich men down East somewhere, who were making our Sunday-school books and papers, and also making lots of money out of the schools that use them. That's what father thought too. I believe I'm getting my eyes open a little bit to see that Baptists are doing lots of good all over the world, through these three National Societies, as our superintendent calls them. For one, I'm glad to know a little something about these things; it makes a fellow feel bigger to give his money for something outside of ourselves.'

"'You're right, Dick; and I liked what our State Sunday-school missionary said in that letter telling us about his travels. He has some pretty tough times, don't he? You know he said he wanted the boys and girls to *earn the money they gave*, so that we'd be giving what belongs to *us*, instead of father's and mother's money.'

"'Yes, Bert, and his head is level on that subject too. Why, when father or mother have given me a penny, it always looked pretty small to *just carry it for them.* I'm going to let them put in their own pennies if they want, and I'm going to try, in some way, to earn at least ten cents a week for these Societies; and I believe I can do it too.' So another step in the education of our boys and girls in the Christian grace of giving, is taken.

"The fourth Sunday in the month, before the collection is taken, the superintendent says:

"'When we look over the field of the whole world, and see the millions who are dying without a knowledge of the Saviour, we must see how great is the call for ministers of the gospel. We have a large number of colleges and seminaries where young men are being educated for the ministry; many of them are not in circumstances to educate themselves without some aid from other sources. Then, too, there are many young men who would enter the ranks of the students in our institutions, if they were able to see how they could secure a thorough education. Now, our Education Society is in need of money for these and other purposes. Ought we not to want to con-

tribute to help such a needed work? Think of the many fields crying for ministers of the gospel!'

"With what the school has learned of the work of the three National Societies, they are interested to give cheerfully and willingly to aid in educating workers.

"After this department of our denominational work is brought up and explained, two young men of the school engage in earnest conversation. Says one of them:

"'Before learning my trade, I did really think of entering the ministry. But father was not able to help me through college, and I gave it up. If I had known of the existence of such a Society as our superintendent has told us about, I would surely have let some one know how I felt. I shall be glad to contribute toward such an object.'

"'Yes,' says the other, who is just starting in business for himself, 'and who can tell but some of the boys in *our* school may be having just such thoughts as you had. I hope our superintendent will tell us more about our institutions of learning, for *I want to give as the Lord prospers me;* and hope, some day, to give largely for all the objects in which we, as a denomination, should be interested.'

"So, on other fourth Sundays in the month, the wise superintendent gives items of interest from our educational field.

"When this wise superintendent's plan had been worked four Sundays, he was visited at his place of business by good Deacon Restless.

"He was greeted with a cheery 'Good-morning,' and a chair given him near the stove; for the autumn gales had just begun, and a fire was needed for comfort. The deacon unburdens his heart:

"'Now, Brother M., you *have* done it, haven't you? I've been watching your little plan of late. First Sunday, collection for Foreign Missions; second Sunday, Home Missions; third Sunday, Publication Society; fourth Sunday, Education. Now, how are you going to get money to buy quarterlies and papers for your own school? You forgot *that* in your little plan, didn't you? Don't you know what the Good Book says about those who do not provide for their own, being worse than infidels?'

"'Why, deacon, I guess that will be all right. You know there are four or five months each year with five Sundays. On these fifth Sundays we shall take collections for our own school. With these, and with

the contributions by the church, to *provide for her own* Sunday-school, we shall have enough for ourselves and something to spare for the occasional calls *outside* the usual channels; for instance, for a house of worship which is burned up, or is blown away in a cyclone. And, deacon, there is something else on my mind that it seems to me our school ought to contribute toward; you know our minister is pastor of the Sunday-school, and I am really seriously thinking of asking the pupils to bring offerings for *their* pastor's salary. By the way, have you noticed how much more interesting the school is since we began contributing to all our Societies?'

"'No,' gruffly, but truthfully, replied the deacon; *for he had not been looking for increased interest* in the school.

"'Why, deacon, all our teachers report much interest in their classes; a goodly number of the boys and girls have, during the past month, become Christians, and are becoming deeply interested in the work of all our Societies. Many of the pupils have promised the Lord *at least one tenth* of all the money they ever receive. I tell you, deacon, when the teachers and members of the church *purpose in their hearts to give*

cheerfully, as the Lord prospers them, we shall have more money than we know what to do with, almost.'

"The conversation had turned into a different channel from that which the deacon had expected; and as the old gentleman had never known the rich blessing attendant upon liberal and cheerful giving, he began to feel uncomfortable, and rose to go. As he started for the door, his parting words were:

"'Try as you may, young man, you can't improve on the old way of doing things.'

"Our superintendent has all due respect for those older than himself, but is, nevertheless, thoroughly convinced that the only way we can ever have a generation of cheerful givers, and those who give as the Lord prospers them, is to begin with the boys and girls. Train them in the knowledge of what our denomination is doing throughout the world, through its different agencies. Let them give intelligently; then, and not till then, shall we cease to hear the voice of the chronic complainer, when a collection is called for."

The visitor had just finished reading, when the dinner-bell sounded its call, and, as he rose to enter the house, he said:

"I firmly believe that paper sets forth the true method of training in benevolence; and my school shall have an opportunity of testing the plan. If all our pastors and superintendents would enter heartily into the scheme proposed, it would surprise them to see the amounts contributed for the evangelization of the world."

When all were seated around the table, each repeated a verse of Scripture before partaking of the food prepared.

Mabel's verse read: "It is more blessed to give than to receive."

Ralphie's: "The Lord loveth a cheerful giver."

Mamma's: "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the *first fruits* of all thine increase."

Papa's: "God is able to make all grace abound toward you."

The visitor: "See that ye abound in this grace also."

AN AUTUMN PICNIC.

EARLY in the spring, a letter, telling of the needs of our State Sunday-school Work, was mailed *to every Baptist teacher in Minnesota.* It met with various receptions. One school voted very squarely not to contribute anything to the work, pleading, "enough to do in our *own* school and immediate neighborhood"; another school said: "All our collections not used for our *own* support we give to foreign missions"; one superintendent advised his teachers "not to bring up the matter in their classes"; *one teacher laid the letter aside, carelessly,* and the bright class are in total ignorance of what the State Sunday-school Work is. But "none of these things move me" to relate this experience. Other Christian workers, striving to enlighten and educate the ignorant concerning benevolent enterprises, have had their communications treated in a similar manner, and, like the writer, have survived.

Two years before, an Eastern pastor had been compelled, by failure of health, to seek a more Northern climate; he came to our magnificent Minnesota, and the Lord opened the way for him to preach to a little Baptist Church in a rural neighborhood. The pure air soon brought renewed strength of body.

The pastor and his good wife began their labor of love with the little church that had become "much discouraged by the way." Two years of solid work brought the little band to a most desirable condition; additions to its membership occurred from time to time, and wanderers were reclaimed and brought back to their Father's house.

Among the many good things which might be said of this church, probably no one improvement is more remarkable than its education in benevolent contributions. Foreign Missions, Home Missions, Publication Society, Christian Education—*all* are remembered by timely and liberal contributions.

When the pastor of this people received the communication from the missionary concerning the work in Minnesota, he immediately brought the matter before his Sunday-school; he proposed that each

member earn something to aid in the work; he suggested ways in which boys and girls might find work, for which they should receive pay. All should have ample time to accomplish what they had undertaken. Some time in September they would have a picnic, to which the missionary should be invited. Each person would write a little letter to the guest of the occasion, telling how the money was earned, and bring the offering to the picnic.

From May till September the object was constantly before the boys and girls, and right heartily did each "little man and little woman" enter into the plan proposed by another missionary some time ago, when he said: "Upon the first day of the week let every one of you lay by him in store, as God hath prospered him, *that there be no gatherings when I come.*"

When the Indian summer days of late September came, an invitation to the missionary to be present at the Autumn Picnic was received. So much fall work remained to be done, and teams were so busy, that the usual fears of failure found place in many minds.

The morning of picnic day was most delightful, and a large number of old and young gathered at the

country meeting-house to join the procession, that started for the grove at half-past nine o'clock. The inhabitants of farm houses along the road came out to see the joyful company as it passed.

The ride over the smooth country road ended, the woods soon resounded with the merry voices of happy-hearted children. With hammocks, swings, croquet, and other picnic pastimes, the hours passed most pleasantly.

After dinner the hammocks were swung in a semi-circle about an elevated platform; between them were placed wagon-seats, so that sittings were provided for the large company. When all were comfortably seated, the pastor said:

"I have received quite a number of letters addressed to our Sunday-school missionary, and if he will take a seat upon the platform, I will deliver his mail, on the one condition that he read aloud the contents for the benefit of the assembled audience."

As the missionary took the place assigned him, the pastor continued:

"We are all much interested in our State Sunday-school work, and believe that department of church work to be the most fruitful field for securing our

Spicy Breezes.

future church membership, believing Dr. Holland was right when he said: 'We can raise more Christians by juvenile Christian culture than by adult conversion—a thousand to one.' Hence, we gladly welcome to-day in our midst one who is engaged in a work aiming to win our boys and girls for Christ."

The pastor then handed the missionary *a package of very heavy letters*, all of which he opened and read aloud to the audience.

The first letter opened was as follows:

"DEAR UNCLE BOSTON: Here is *one dollar* to help along your good work; earned by selling potatoes. J. L. K."

Then came a note saying:

"The within dollar and a half is from Mrs. S. H., Mrs. L. S. T., and Mrs. G. T., who are interested in any effort that is being made to build up Sunday-schools throughout our State."

Another read:

"I earned my fifty cents selling sweet corn that I raised in my little garden. GEORGE H."

Then came:

"Here is fifty cents I earned picking up plums

and potatoes. I hope it will help in your work, and I wish I could give more. GRACIE H."

The following letters came in quick succession :

"Here is twenty-five cents I earned by getting some brush away from under the trees. I hope it will help your work a little. MELLIE W."

"I send you fifty cents, earned by ringing the synagogue bell. L. H."

"I have to earn all the money I have, because my father and mother think it is better for children to *earn* their money than to have it given to them. I have a number of ways of earning money, such as trapping gophers and striped squirrels (which steal a great deal of father's grain), picking berries, and picking up potatoes. My father lets me have a small piece of land, and I have all I can raise on it. I enclose sixty cents. I like to go to Sunday-school, and think it would be nice if every boy and girl could have as good a chance as I have. E. G."

"I suppose I am one of your nephews, because I go to the Sunday-school. I send you fifty cents to help in your Sunday-school work. I earned this

money catching gophers and picking berries. My father gives me ten cents apiece for pocket gophers, and five cents apiece for striped gophers, and mother gives me three cents a box for picking berries. I hope we shall raise money for your work again next year. L. G."

"Here is fifty cents, obtained by easy work of picking peas and planting potatoes. L. H."

"My money, seventy-five cents, was earned picking cucumbers. A. S. F."

"Enclosed is one dollar, for your work. It is part of the tithe of my little crop of tomatoes. The Lord bless you in your work. Z. C. H."

"Some work fell into my hands, and the enclosed one dollar is part of the pay. May the Lord bless it to the salvation of some soul. L. H."

"My one dollar and a quarter was earned by *practicing*, not *preaching*. Doctor W."

Then came the following:

"I send you fifty cents to help on your Sunday-school work. I earned part by picking peas for a neighbor, and the rest selling sweet corn raised in my

little garden. I love the Sunday-school, and I love my teacher; and within the last year, I have learned to love my Saviour; and I wish I had more to give, that other children might learn to love him, too.

"MINNIE B. H."

Then followed a little rhyme for the Primary Class, by Mrs. H.:

The Infant Class, a little band,
We give our joyous greeting
To "Uncle Boston," our kind friend,
On this first happy meeting.

We love our precious Sunday-school,
We love our teacher dearly;
Superintendent, pastor, too,
Who points to heaven so clearly.

We come, as you have asked us to,
Our little offerings bringing,
That other children, too, may learn
The happy songs we're singing;

That they may learn of that sweet home,
Which Jesus is preparing;
Where all who love him here will dwell—
His wondrous mercy sharing.

"*We earned three dollars* all ourselves."
Our hearts and hands were willing,
And some a shining quarter bring,
Some sixpence, some a shilling.

Our teacher picked strawberries sweet,
So we would follow after;
And *Cliffie* found cucumbers green,
With merry, childish laughter;

While *Vertie* picked tomatoes ripe,
Potatoes gathered *Freddie*,
And *Nellie* washed the dishes clean,
And peas were picked by *Eddie*.

Strawberries yielded to the touch
Of *Retta's* fingers nimble;
Mabel washed dishes, *Juna* ran
For mamma's spool or thimble.

Mamie, to help the work along,
Took care of baby brother—
Busy, you see, we all have been,
In one way or another.

Now these, our offerings, "Uncle," dear,
With our best love we give them,
And ask that Jesus, too, may bless,
As you will now receive them,

And bless you in your work of love,
And when, "beyond the river,"
His little children all shall meet,
We'll praise him there, forever.

Other letters containing offerings were received and read, and many that day remembered "the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive."

This was a little country school, but the amount

contributed for the advancement of Christ's Kingdom was *more than twenty dollars.*

As the pastor and missionary rode home together, the former said:

"I was surprised to see the cheerfulness with which the boys and girls received your proposition *that they earn the money* given for your work, and am delighted with the result; and I am persuaded that this is the more excellent way of raising money for the Lord's cause. It is a grand improvement on holding fairs, eating oysters, and having tableaux. Try as hard as we may, we shall never improve on the methods given us in the Book which Baptists take for their guide. I fear too many Baptists only take it as a guide to baptism, though it is just as explicit on the subject of giving."

The sun sank like a ball of fire beyond the timber, west of the pastor's home, as the team stopped at the front gate; and in a little while the great red harvest moon seemed to rise out of the prairie, ten miles away.

The day had been indeed a happy one to all who attended the Autumn Picnic.

THE KING'S FAVORITES.

AS the afternoon train stopped at a Western Minnesota town, the missionary was met by the pastor of the Baptist Church.

In answer to an inquiry concerning the work, the pastor said:

"We have had a glorious refreshing from the presence of the Lord, and I have baptized nineteen as the result of the meetings."

Upon asking for the names of the new converts, the pastor mentioned not one with which the missionary was familiar.

Having conducted children's meetings upon previous visits to the place, he felt a deep longing to hear that some of the many bright boys and girls of the place had decided for Christ. But not one of their names was on the list. On asking an explanation, the pastor said:

"The work seemed to be among the older people. We had one very remarkable conversion. An old

man, seventy-five years of age, was led to accept Christ as his Saviour, and everybody in town is talking about the wonderful change that has come to old Brother M. It is one of the greatest trophies of my ministerial work."

The missionary said:

"I think I know what must be his favorite song."

"Oh," said the happy pastor, "he sings the new song now, and with all his heart; but what hymn occurred to you as the old man's favorite?"

"The most appropriate song for a man who has served the devil for more than three score and ten years and then is converted, must be:

> 'Amazing grace, how sweet the sound,
> That saved *a wretch like me.*'"

"Well," said the pastor, "it surely is *amazing grace* that saves such a sinner."

The missionary then asked:

"Do you regard the conversion of a man who has given the best years of his life to Satan's service as a greater trophy than leading a boy or girl to Christ?"

The pastor replied:

"I think much care is needed in receiving children into church membership, lest in after years they conclude that it was a mistake. But I should like to know just what you think about child conversion."

"Mistakes are far more frequently made in failing to fold the lambs, than in wisely encouraging the boys and girls to enroll themselves among Christ's followers. There is a vast difference between a saved soul and a saved life. One of our Minnesota pastors recently baptized a beautiful little girl of eight years; her song is:

'I will follow Jesus
All the way.'

"Of how much greater value to the cause of Christ is the conversion of 'one of these little ones,' than an aged sinner. It seems to me that, in the light of past history, and the fact that nine-tenths of our preachers, missionaries, and other Christian workers, were converted in childhood, that the time for more earnest effort to save the boys and girls has come. The mistakes are not made in receiving them into the church when giving clear evidence of having been regenerated, but in failing to train

them after having united with the church. That failure is the cause of nine-tenths of all backsliding."

Arriving at the parsonage, we went to the pastor's study, his good wife being at the Woman's Home Mission meeting. The subject was again introduced by the preacher:

"There must be something wrong with our preaching, or we should have more than twenty baptisms in twelve months. And how many of our churches have less than that! I noticed, not long ago, in one of our religious papers, that in one of the large city churches, numbering more than a thousand members, there were less than seventy-five baptisms during the year. Now, is the difficulty with the preacher or the church members?"

The missionary replied:

"Of course preachers are expected to prepare sermons for the edifying of their church; and, if they succeeded, it would seem as if those members who are built up would be trained in working for lost souls. We see how few adults are received into our churches by baptism; but earnest effort to win the boys and girls for Christ is always rewarded."

The pastor then asked:

"How is it with other pastors? Do they believe in the conversion of children?"

"One of the pastors in the State recently said to me: 'Eighteen boys and girls recently united with my church. When they told what the Lord had done for them, the older members said there had never been more satisfactory Christian experiences related by applicants for admission into their church.' This pastor holds two afternoon meetings a week, wherein the young converts are trained in Bible knowledge, and ways of working for Christ. These meetings are held during the summer as well as the winter months. It is very helpful to go into one of these meetings, held after the boys and girls are out of school; they speak and pray in a manner that surprises older people."

"Do you think they really understand what it is to be a Christian?" asked the skeptical pastor.

"I have in my pocket a few letters recently received from these boys and girls. You may read them, if you would like to know what they have to say for themselves."

"I shall be pleased to read them; for it seems as

if boys and girls that are willing to put in black and white their Christian experience, must be truly converted."

As the missionary handed the letters, written in schoolgirl and schoolboy chirography, he remarked:

"These letters are written by boys and girls from nine to fifteen years of age."

The visitor looked over the pastor's library, while the latter read the following letters:

"DEAR UNCLE BOSTON: We are having delightful meetings. While you were here I never spoke in meeting at all; but now, I love to speak and pray. I just love these meetings, and I can go to all of them. I think our meetings are bringing many souls to Christ. Next Sunday, they are going to baptize twenty-five, who have given their hearts to Christ. I thank God I have stopped playing marbles for keeps. I have played only one game for keeps since I became a Christian. Our pastor is having us find all the 'Fear nots' of the Bible. Mine was this: 'And Moses said unto the people: Fear not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.' I pray for you every evening.

"Your Nephew, R."

"DEAR UNCLE BOSTON: I have been trusting Jesus for two weeks; he has been very precious to me since I gave my heart to him. I like to read my Bible more than I used to. I know that Jesus saves me, because I believe in him. John 3: 16.

"Your Niece, B."

"DEAR UNCLE BOSTON: I thought I would write to you. Well, you told us to write about how we were saved. Well, the first meeting I went to I did not like it very much. When the meeting was most ended, a man came up and talked with me, and prayed. I went home and prayed for myself. I came to the next meeting and felt how sinful I was. And then the next day I came, and one of my playmates came and talked with me, and I gave my heart to Jesus Christ, who died for me. I think John 3: 16, and Matthew 5: 8, have helped me more than any other verses; but I like them all, now. Jesus is more precious to me every day.

"Your Nephew, W."

"DEAR UNCLE BOSTON: I gave myself up to Christ two weeks ago, and he has been very precious to me. I believe that Jesus died for me, and that he

will keep and save me for his own child. Ever since I have been to the meetings I have loved Jesus more and more. I did not love the Bible as well as I do now. I go to all the meetings I can. I like the hymn "Oh, happy day that fixed my choice.' If we never meet again on earth, we will meet in that beautiful home above.

"Your loving Niece, M."

"DEAR UNCLE BOSTON: I am glad to have the opportunity of telling you how I became a follower of Christ. I am so glad I listened when Jesus spoke to me, and did not say, *another time.* I never liked to have any one talk with me about becoming a Christian; but they did in the inquiry meetings, and I could not forget what they said about my need of a Saviour and a clean heart.

"I stumbled a long time because I could not see that all there was to do was to give myself to Jesus, and then believe that he had taken me in faith of the promise, 'Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.'

"At first I trusted too much to my feelings, looking within to find some evidence that I did love

Jesus; but I found nothing in my heart to make me think I did, and came very near giving up.

"After awhile I found that *I wanted to do God's will*, and do something for him; and the more I worked for him, the more I loved him and trusted him. Whenever I ask for help it comes, though at the time I sometimes don't recognize it; it comes in such a different way from that in which I expected it. I am happy in his service, and though I often wander from him, he is always willing to take me back.

"I remember the first time I witnessed for him was in school, the next day after the night I was baptized. One said: 'You were ducked last night, weren't you?' I know my face flushed, but I said, 'Lord help me.' I answered, '*I was baptized*'; and was about to say 'in obedience to Jesus'; but my schoolmate laughed and passed on. A great many times he has helped me to turn away the quick words that unkind remarks of my playmates brought to my lips. Then comes the help from learning parts of the Bible; for then I think, 'For God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.'

"I am praying for you in your work, and so are the other girls. Your Niece, N."

"DEAR UNCLE BOSTON: This afternoon I read something that helped me so much. It was this: 'That believing in and coming to Christ were all one; and that he that came, that is, *ran out*, in his heart and affections after salvation by Christ, he indeed *believed* in Christ. He that *believeth hath* everlasting life.'

"My stumbling block when I was trying to come to Christ was that I could not believe that *I did believe*. When I was told that the mere fact that I was striving after Christ showed that *I did* believe, and that believing was all that was required—not a great revelation of Christ to the soul, not an experience of great peace and joy, but simple *belief*—then it was that I could accept my salvation, with patience to *wait* for all the rest.

"Sometimes I get into a dark place in my Christian life, when even the beautiful passages of Scripture seem perfectly blank, and seem to do me no good; but when I simply hold on, with little faith, perhaps, to my Saviour's promise that not one of his

lambs shall be plucked out of his hand, I find the darkness going, and even feel myself the stronger for having had the trial. Sometimes the verses I read in such times come to my memory afterwards very helpfully, as promised when God said: 'For as the rain cometh down from heaven and watereth the earth, *so shall my word be: it shall not return unto me void*, but *shall prosper* in the thing whereto I sent it.

"Your loving Niece, M."

"Have you any more letters like these from boys and girls?" asked the pastor, as he finished reading the last letter.

"Yes, I am receiving such epistles from them continually, and have quite a large number on file at home."

"Do pastors and parents generally encourage these Christian boys and girls to unite with the church?"

"I regret to say that many a young disciple is prevented from making a public profession; but the opposition usually comes from parents whose Christian lives at home are not as consistent as they should be."

"Tell me if you do not meet much skepticism

among church-members, pastors, and others, concerning child conversion?"

"Yes, it prevails to an alarming extent; and I wish every pastor in the land would prepare and preach a sermon from the text: 'But whoso shall offend *one of these little ones which believe in me,* it were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea.'"

"That text would fit very closely with some of my people; and I myself shall give more earnest heed to this matter than ever before," answered the interested pastor.

The pastor's wife had returned from the missionary meeting, and we were summoned to tea, more convinced than ever that "these little ones" are indeed the "King's Favorites."

WINTRY BLASTS.

MISSIONARY LIFE ON THE FRONTIER.

AT the completion of his education, Pastor B. had found a most delightful Eastern pastorate. It was in a large town, where non-church goers were looked upon as lower caste. The snug little parsonage was the delight of the pastor's wife. The little garden spot was the preacher's pet, and right faithfully did he cultivate it; vegetables and fruit of their own raising, were among their pleasures of living in so comfortable a Take-Ease home.

Everybody in the place had established habits. The church was one of long-standing, having been organized nearly sixty years. One sermon a day, Sunday-school, an evening prayer service, the mid-week prayer-meeting, the few pastoral visits, the occasional funeral services, and the few weddings, made up the life of the Baptist pastor at M——.

People were satisfied with the sermon, paid their pastor, and thought their obligations met. When the preacher would inspire them with the missionary

spirit, "Enough to do at home," was their bulwark of defense. Pastor and people began to narrow their lives and usefulness.

The young preacher had much time for his study, and excellent opportunity to "brighten up" on his Hebrew and other branches, for which he had desired time, since his graduation. An easier and more comfortable field could not be found, for one who had enlisted to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Three beautiful children had come to gladden their home. And, in every respect, no pastor could desire more of this world's comforts.

A change came. An old seminary friend, who had sought a Western field, sent him a copy of *The Standard*. It contained a letter, telling the needs of Minnesota as a mission field. Something in this letter seemed to ask: "Who will go for us?" One sentence remained constantly in his mind; it was:

"No mission field in Minnesota is an easy one, but *men* are needed to aid in making Baptist history in this new State."

"That means hard work," Pastor B. said to himself. "Probably small pay, and perquisites in proportion." He prayed over it a whole week. His good

wife noticed an unsettled look upon her husband's face; she asked and received the explanation:

"Well, wife, it is very pleasant here; our nice little home, a most comfortable pastorate, the short distance to the city, the Monday morning meeting of ministers there, the inspiration received from such prominent men of our denomination, and acquaintance with them, all go to make this one of the most desirable fields to be found anywhere."

"Yes," said his estimable wife, as her husband hesitated.

"Ought we to leave it for the untried experiences of a Minnesota mission field?" he added.

"If the Lord says to my husband, 'Go,' we should willingly say, as did Israel of old to their Joshua: 'Whithersoever thou sendest us we will go.'"

The wife went to her morning's work in her delightful little home, the husband to his study, to decide if the Lord were leading in this matter; as he took up *The Standard* to read again the letter from Minnesota, his eyes fell upon a missionary experience in which the hardships and deprivations of a Western field were depicted.

Could he take his family to a place where such

things are encountered? It was a hard struggle. He thought of his three bright children, and of the loss of school privileges, and the prospect of taking a needy church in some destitute neighborhood; these thoughts brought a feeling akin to home-sickness. He decided to write to his old friend Fred, with whom he was so closely associated during his seminary course.

The answer came, in which the home mission field did not take on any new attractions.

"But," said the letter, "if a man has Christian manhood, the West is the place for its development—it is the place where a man has opportunity for growth. I never had as much pastoral work to do in six months in the East as I have here in a week; and my pulpit preparation requires me to be at my best every Sunday. The most difficult thing I meet with is the getting into some designated work those who have come West from fifteen or twenty different churches, and all think the way they used to do in *their* church East is the only way on earth; and when the fifteen or twenty churches all did things in as many different ways, it requires a wisdom not of this earth to get the membership developed. I think

if our seminaries could only impart instruction in a knowledge of human nature, it would greatly aid us who are called to Western fields. Of course, the work is hard, and things seem to move very slowly at times; but nothing could persuade me to give up present hardships and experiences, because of the liberal education they are to me for future work."

And so the letter continued, but contained no highly colored pictures of the pleasures of a new field at the West.

Several weeks passed by, and the Eastern pastor felt more and more drawn westward.

As the winter drew toward its close, the pastor tendered his resignation, to take effect May 1. Every effort was put forth to induce him to stay. Less work and more pay was suggested, but he had received the higher call of duty. He felt sure that many applications for the vacant pastorate would be made, and it could be supplied much more easily than urgent calls from Western frontier fields.

The Superintendent of Missions for Minnesota, whose address he found in the eventful *Standard*, was written to.

Hard work and small pay at first, with a cordial

invitation to visit Minnesota, was the substance of the superintendent's letter. His first thought was to leave his family in the East until settled with a church; but his noble wife said if the Lord called her husband to the West, she would go with him, and share whatever experience came.

Arriving in Minneapolis, he was cordially received by the excellent pastors and devoted members, who are so deeply interested in the future of Baptists in Minnesota. He was told that a call had recently come for the organization of a new church on the prairies of Western Minnesota. There was something attractive to him in the idea of organizing a church with entirely new material; he at once decided to look over the field; and with his good wife and family, started by rail to the little railway station one hundred and fifty miles west of Minneapolis. The prime mover in the new enterprise was to drive his team to the station to meet the new minister.

As the train pursued its way over green prairies, stretching far as the eye could see, the Eastern family, for the first time in their lives, began to realize what Minnesota prairies meant. The all-day ride became very monotonous, and right glad were they, as the

train stopped at the solitary little railroad station of C——.

Good Brother M. gave the preacher a cordial welcome; and soon the farm wagon was off over the prairie, with its Baptist load. The pastor's wife had heard of the loneliness of a stranger in a crowded city; but the feeling of loneliness on that great stretch of prairie, presaged a siege of home-sickness almost unbearable.

She was a brave little woman, however, and knew that complaining would not make her lot one whit easier, so she found joy in noticing the many prairie flowers and grasses; and her cheerfulness wonderfully helped her loved ones during this first experience on Minnesota prairies.

After a drive of eight miles, and the sight of only two of the dwellings of men, Brother M. pointed out his residence, a mile further on. As they drew near to it, the question of accommodating a family of five in such a small building, suggested doubts as to all occupying it at the same time; and when Brother M.'s wife *and five children* came out to welcome the new minister, the question of accommodation caused further mystery to loom up. The good brother

informed the pastor that they had only been on the claim a short time, and had been able to build but two rooms of their house. One of the rooms was set apart for the new family, who were unable to discover what was done with Brother M.'s family of seven.

When they were settled in genuine frontier fashion, the pastor talked over matters with Brother M. He learned that, in a radius of fifteen miles, there were about twelve Baptists, no meeting-house of any kind, not even a school-house. It was evident to his mind that his flock was scattered, to say the least. A hard-riding horse was furnished for his use, and, not being proficient in horseback riding, the outlook was not very pleasant. He soon started to look up the stray sheep that were to compose his flock. After riding for a week, he decided to call the brethren and sisters together to see about organizing a new church. Thirteen came, and, after deliberation and prayer, the Baptist Church of C. was organized, meetings to be held at the homes of the members, as appointed at each gathering. There was a striking contrast between his comfortable pastorate in the East, and this western ministry; but all summer long he worked faithfully with the prairie church, and souls were born into

Christ's kingdom who, but for his coming, might have gone, as thousands in this western land, into the service of Satan.

The question of a home had, of course, been met, upon his call to become pastor of the church. There was but one thing that could be done, and that just what the other members had done—"take a claim." This the pastor did, with the promise of members of the church "to break it" for him, so that he might give sufficient time to pastoral work. He had put up "a claim shanty" of two rooms. They were glad that most of their household goods had been disposed of before leaving their eastern home, for, with their close quarters, there was little room for furniture. From their garden they had all the vegetables needed, but sadly missed the fruit to which they had been so accustomed in their former home. Having secured a cow and a horse, in part payment for salary, a rough log shed had been built and roofed with several loads of straw. The summer had been a most delightful one to them; and the novelty of their surroundings, in contrast with former conveniences, had a peculiar interest. The children missed their old playmates, but soon learned western ways and made no com-

plaint. Their studies were pursued under their mother's instruction. She was a woman who had time to get acquainted with her children.

As the fall weather came on, preparations for the winter engaged their time and attention. The long Minnesota winter would require a large amount of fuel, which had to be drawn fifteen miles. A good supply had been prepared. The house had been banked, to guard against the cold, and had the appearance of being half buried by the three feet of dirt around its four sides, the only break in the embankment being at the door of the shanty. Food for Billy and Brindle had been laid in. They seemed to be more fully prepared than ever before for the winter season. Their house, of course, had not been plastered; but building paper had been freely used, and they hoped for a mild winter.

The first snow-storm came about the middle of October, and soon developed into a full-grown blizzard; of such a storm they never had heard. For two days and nights the storm raged most furiously. Nothing could be seen six feet beyond their window. The darkness was so great that a lighted lamp seemed necessary in the day-time as much as at night. It

was difficult to keep warm with the stove going at full speed; they were completely shut off from the world about them; long and drearily did the hours drag on; it did seem as if they would freeze to death. Their nearest neighbor was a mile away. In doing his "chores," the pastor frosted both hands and feet. The third day the blizzard ceased; the sun shone clear and bright over the vast expanse of snow; great drifts surrounded the house, and looking beyond, immense wave-like heaps could be seen on the sea of snow. For a week, no one could go to a neighbor's. On Sunday, the church was to meet at the pastor's; but not a soul came. Visiting his people was out of the question, as a trip over such prairies in winter, with no roads broken, is a most hazardous undertaking. One meeting was held the following Sunday, with only half a dozen present. Few calls could be made, owing to the severity of the weather.

In about two weeks another storm came, and our family were completely "snowed in." It was impossible for any one to go to the station for mail, and sadly missed were papers and letters from the East. Pastoral work was ended for many days;

there was plenty of time for study and pulpit preparation, but little opportunty for preaching.

In February, their fuel was nearly gone; it seemed as if they must perish, if the winter held on much longer; the weather continued intensely cold; the last stick of wood was put in the stove; they then twisted straw with which to replenish the fire in their single stove. It finally became necessary for them to remain in bed until nearly noon in order to keep warm. They must have food, and a wood fire was needed; so, resolving upon one warm meal a day, every piece of wood about the house that could be spared was used as fuel. Soon their kitchen table, and then the wooden chairs were burned. The only way to keep themselves from freezing was to remain in bed beneath abundant bed-clothing.

After ten days, as the weather moderated, the farmers found it necessary to go for more wood; and by paying an exorbitant price, the pastor secured a cord of wood, which, by careful use, carried them to the breaking up of the winter.

With the return of spring came joy and gladness to the eastern pastor's household on the western frontier. It had indeed been a hard winter for them, but

they stayed through another year until the harvest was ripe; the day before the grain was to be cut, a hail-storm destroyed the entire wheat crop of every member of the little church. The members removed to other places, and soon the little church was scattered.

Shall we say the two year's work done by this pastor who had brought his wife, a lady of culture and refinement, to such a small field, were years wasted? Some of those brought into that little prairie church are to-day among the most substantial and useful Christians in other places—active helpers to other pastors.

The following fall, the pastor removed to a thriving railroad town, where his family were comfortably situated for the winter; he spent the winter months conducting special meetings with smaller churches along that line of road. Many souls were led to Christ; two new churches organized; and to-day he is one of the most useful, devoted, and loved men in the Northwest.

His wife recently remarked that, terrible as was their first winter in Minnesota, the experience was one of great profit to them; and they both rejoiced in the work God had called them to do in their "missionary life on the frontier."

PRODIGALS AND PRISONERS.

AS the day train over the Manitoba Railway hurried through the "Park Region" of Minnesota, the missionary fell into conversation with a fellow-traveler. It required but little time to learn that the traveling companions were acquainted with the language of the kingdom, for both had learned the sweet lesson of "sowing beside all waters."

The commercial traveler was one of the best salesmen on the road; in two years of service in Minnesota, he had built up a very large trade. His leisure hour.. not spent as so many of the fraternity too often pass the time; the play-house, the billiard hall, and the saloon, had no attractions for him. On the contrary, when running into a little town where was located a weak Baptist Church, he would seek out the pastor or prayer meeting. Many evenings were passed pleasantly and profitably in the society of

pastors thus met; many a little prayer-meeting was cheered by his encouraging words.

The missionary was glad to meet such a man with whom to take an all-day ride. The train pushed over prairies, wound its way through woods, along the shores of beautiful lakes, past prosperous villages, stopping at thriving towns, and as they rode, the two travelers talked. Said the salesman:

"Do you meet many prodigal sons in your missionary work?"

"Yes," answered the missionary, "scarcely a trip is made that does not reveal such wanderers; and some of my most enjoyable work has been among prodigals and prisoners."

"Then I want to hear some of your experiences, for I am specially interested in this class of men, so numerous in our Western towns. You shall have an attentive listener, and don't hesitate about going into particulars."

"Well, I'll give you a little account of one trip along a new line of railroad, where church privileges are rare. The trip was made last winter. I had received numerous urgent letters, asking me to visit the new towns along the road.

"The train arrived at the first town I was to visit about four o'clock in the morning. The wind was blowing most fiercely; the thermometer was about twenty below zero; of course, everybody in town was asleep, except the station agent; he directed me to the house of the man with whom I had corresponded; it was about half a mile over the prairie. I nearly froze before reaching my destination. After pounding on the door three or four times, I was admitted by the man of the house; except being sheltered from the piercing wind, it was well-nigh as cold in-doors as out; but the old gentleman soon kindled a fire in the kitchen stove. When comfortably warm, I was informed that if I wished to rest until morning, the old lounge in the room could be used; my entertainer went up stairs to bed, and I was left alone. I slept until seven o'clock, when preparations were made for breakfast, and five railroad men sat down to the morning meal. My host kept a railroad boarding house.

"As we sat at the breakfast table, I noticed a young man about twenty-three years of age; he was bright and intelligent; one could not but notice his attractive face. As he found me constantly looking toward

him, he became less and less talkative, until he spoke only in answer to questions asked him.

"I was to organize a Sunday-school that evening; and after breakfast, one of the daughters went with me, calling from house to house, to invite all who would come to the kitchen of my host—as that was the most available room in the new town. No church or school building had yet been erected; but two or three felt that a Sunday-school must be organized, if in no more convenient place than the kitchen of this western home. The little station house of the railroad had been secured for one afternoon service.

"At seven o'clock in the evening, the kitchen was full of children, who came to join the new school. Among those present, was the young man who had been looked into silence at the breakfast table.

"After organizing the school, with the oldest daughter as superintendent, I preached a little sermon to the boys and girls. The young man seemed deeply affected, and tears stood in his eyes, as the simple story of the cross was told. When the people left, and the hour for retiring arrived, I read a passage of Scripture, and prayed with the family.

"The young man kindly invited me to share his bed

that night; his room showed that he was the favorite boarder. The light being extinguished, and we comfortably settled in bed, it was not difficult to discover that the young man carried a burdened heart. Drawing him out gradually, I learned that his parents lived in the East, but had not the slightest idea of his whereabouts. His father and mother were both Christians, and he had once made a profession of religion; but since coming to the West, had led a most reckless life; he had not once written to his parents since leaving home, and knew they must be greatly grieved because of his conduct.

"He confessed that the little sermon of the evening had made him think of home, and he wished to unburden his heart to one who served his mother's Saviour. Upon learning this, I assured him of my interest in young men, and hoped he would allow me to help him in any way I might.

"His confession was most shocking. I did not wonder that he hid from father and mother, who had hoped for better things from their noble boy, a few years before. He was but one of thousands of prodigal sons to be found throughout the West. We lay till almost morning, talking over the matter.

"He finally made a half promise to write to his parents; and if they would receive him to their hearts and home, he would cease his wicked life and return to the home of his boyhood. I fear he did not keep his promise, or he would have written of his return home."

As the missionary paused, the salesman said:

"I suppose there *are* thousands of young men in the new West who are doing just what this one confessed to you. But go on with the rest of the trip, for I am much interested."

"The next place at which I stopped was a notoriously wicked town. The pastor of the little church had advertised a meeting for all the boys and girls of the town on Sunday afternoon. You should have seen the congregation that gathered. It represented all classes of people and society—some from saloon-keeper's homes; some from gamblers' homes; some from homes of shame; a few from Christian homes. Yes, and some genuine cow-boys were in the congregation. With the latter I had quite an experience. They do one of two things—lead or balk.

"The pastor conducted the opening song service. I noticed the half dozen cow-boys about two-thirds of

the way back in the congregations. They liked the music of the gospel hymns; and, as they sang, I discovered a peculiar richness in their voices as they sang different parts. While singing, they were orderly, but disturbed the meeting during Scripture reading and prayer. As soon as the pastor gave me the supervision of the meeting, I at once said:

"'I notice several young men back there who sing very well. I would like to have them for my choir this afternoon.' I then asked: 'Can you sing, 'Hold the Fort'?'

"The leader at once said:

"'Just try us on the first verse, and see for yourself.'

"I then asked the congregation to please join with the choir in singing the chorus. As the cow-boys sang the different parts, the audience was delighted.

"Perhaps some might say it was not just the thing to have such an ungodly choir; but they sang so that people could understand every word, and that is far better than some of our city choirs can do.

"After singing several more gospel hymns, led by my cow-boy choir, I began my 'Ear-gate and eye-gate sermon.' I never had a more attentive and re-

sponsive congregation in my life. The cow-boys seemed most pleased of any with the service.

"At the close of the meeting, I had a little chat with my choir, and learned that several of their number were college graduates; their parents knew nothing of their whereabouts; they had been drawn into their roving, wicked life by the literature they read while at school. They had formerly been attendants at Sunday-school in the East, which accounted for their knowledge of gospel songs. I gave each a package of gospel tracts, which they promised to read."

"Well," said the salesman, "that *was* an experience. If you had not exercised tact in appropriating their musical talent, they would probably have broken up your meeting. But go on."

"As we left the meeting-house, where the service was held, the pastor asked:

"'How would you like to go to prison, now?'

"I told him I was as ready then as at any time.

"He led the way to the other side of the town, to what seemed to be a square stockade, made of logs about twenty feet in length, set in the earth very close together. Inside the hollow-square was an old log

hut, in which were confined eight prisoners; three of them guilty of murder.

"As the jailer unlocked the six outer and inner locks, we were ushered into a little room about ten by twelve, and seven feet high; a single pane of glass let the light into the dark dungeon; by the aid of this dim light, and the flicker of a smoking tallow candle, we were enabled to see the faces of the eight men, who came into the cheerless chapel. The faint light revealed to the eye what the sense of smell had discovered upon entering the dingy den. Of all the filthy places I ever saw, this surpassed them all.

"These eight men had been members of Sunday-schools, in their boyhood; but that, of itself, never saves from a life of sin. As each of those three murderers grasped my hand, upon our introduction, a thrill of horror ran through me.

"The earnestness with which the pastor preached the gospel to those wicked men, I shall never forget. When his sermon was finished, he asked me to talk to them a little while. I told the prisoners that I only preached to the boys and girls, and that if I spoke to them, it would be in the simple way in which I addressed the children. They consented to consider

themselves boys, while I preached to them 'a sermon from a wordless book.'

"At the conclusion of my sermon, one of the three men in that prison for murder said, as the tears stood in his eyes and he grasped my hand:

"'Tell the boys you meet that if they will listen to that doctrine and heed it, they will never wind up their lives in such a place as this. I used to hear the gospel, but I never heeded it; and so I am here. God bless you in your work!'

"It was most refreshing to get out into the clear winter air again."

"'Now you ought to write that up. By the way, why don't you write a book of your experience?' asked the sales-man, and then added: 'But please go on with the rest of that eventful trip.'"

"The next morning I started for another new town, that was only four months old, but numbered a thousand souls. The coach in which we traveled contained every type of western life—the cow-boy with his broad-brimmed hat, knives, and revolvers; the man whose every sentence contained an oath; the man whose appetite for liquor was continually indulged; the gambler, whose smile captured many a 'tender-foot;'

the wicked woman was there, indulging in smoking, drinking, and swearing; surely her 'house is the way to hell,' and 'many strong men have been slain by her.' A viler atmosphere I never breathed.

"Upon inquiry, I found that the only Christian man of whom I could hear had gone further west, two days before. In this new town every house was crowded, as I found on looking for a place to sleep. The night was bitter cold, and a genuine blizzard raged most wildly.

"Entering one of the stores and conversing with a young man who was clerk, he said he doubted if there was another Christian than myself in the whole town. I found that he also was one of the many prodigals; in his eastern home he lived a consistent Christian life, but since coming to the West, he had gone the way of thousands; he acknowledged that he ought not to lead his present life, but there was little to encourage a Christian in such a wicked place.

"He asked if I had a place to sleep; and upon learning I had not, he kindly invited me to sleep in the store, if I could do no better. After half an hour's search, with no prospect of a sleeping-place, I

went back to my friend. He said I would have to put up with what they had; and accordingly gave me a blanket with instructions to spread it anywhere on the floor, back of the counter. I rolled the blanket up for a pillow, wrapped myself in my buffalo coat, and prepared for the night's rest. After thanking God for permitting me to be under shelter, I lay down upon the floor.

"At this point there came into the store eleven rough, wicked looking men, seeking shelter from the terrible storm without. As they lay upon the floor of the store in various places, I must confess that I did not feel much like sleeping. Next morning I was not much rested. I arose at five o'clock, and, after paying a dollar for a piece of bread and fat pork, with a cup of questionable coffee, started, with four other fellow-travelers, a mile over the prairie to the railroad station, in the furious snow-storm, which had raged for twelve long hours. We nearly perished with the cold before reaching the station. I was thankful to leave such a sink of iniquity."

"Osakis! Twenty minutes for dinner," called the brakeman, with a lusty voice; and the chapter on prodigals and prisoners came to its—finis.

A RIVER-BANK SUNDAY-SCHOOL.

I HAVE a few calls to make this morning, and if you would like to go with me, I shall be pleased to have you."

So said good Elder B., in the northern part of Minnesota, one bright, crisp morning in February. In a few minutes we were ready for our twelve mile ride over the prairie, stretching far as the eye could see.

For a while, we followed the road made by the wood-hauling teams, over the ice covering the river.

About ten o'clock, so many heavily-loaded wood-teams were met, compelling us to leave the narrow road, that the Elder thought best to take the prairie road. No sooner did we reach the prairie than the cold wind made us draw our heads beneath our furs, as a very few minutes' exposure to such a breeze, would freeze noses, cheeks, and ears.

After a few miles drive in the face of the bitter wind, the Elder started for a house nearly buried in

the snow, half a mile away. In this home we found one of the members of the Elder's church; an old mother in Israel. She spoke of the good times enjoyed in her former church home, and of how she missed the sanctuary privileges, as in winter it was hazardous to venture to town. We gave a liberal supply of Christian literature to this family, and received hearty thanks.

The youngest son, about twenty-two years of age, lay upon a bed where for some time he had been a sufferer from fever. He was not a Christian, which seemed to be the greatest burden his aged mother had to bear. He was willing to talk of his soul's interests; and taking God's word, it proved, as always, the sword of the Spirit which entered the young man's heart, and he asked: "What must I do to be saved?" The Elder pointed the inquirer to the Lamb of God, and we united in prayer at his bedside; and soon the new life was given, and the sufferer rejoiced in a crucified and risen Saviour. The joy of that mother was only exceeded by the joy in heaven over the repentant sinner. This is but one of many like cases met in frontier missionary work

After tarrying a few minutes, the Elder donned

his winter wraps; we buttoned our coats closely about us, and soon were out over the prairie with the wind as sharp as when we stopped. A half hour's drive brought us in sight of another home of one of the members. It was a large, substantial looking frame house, the first of the kind seen since leaving town.

The Elder hastened the speed of his team, and we reached what promised to be a shelter, only to find the doors and windows securely fastened. There being no signs of life or warmth about the place, we again started out upon our cold drive.

Meeting a man on his way to town with a load of wood, we asked if knew anything of the disappearance of the Sinclair family?

"You'll find them over by the river; they couldn't stand the cold winds here on the prairie."

So we took the road over which our teamster friend had traveled. It did seem as though we should freeze before shelter could be reached; but a turn in the road put the wind at our backs, and the ride became a little less uncomfortable. After driving a mile the road entered the wooded banks of the little river, and we were sheltered from the intense cold.

Driving through the timber, we soon found a road leading down to the ice, covering the stream, on which we kept our course until we reached what seemed to be a barnyard on the ice, a rudely constructed shed covered with straw, around which stood cold cattle and half frozen fowls, warming themselves in the rays of the bright sun. A few rods away, in the side of the river-bank facing the south, was a most grotesque looking shanty. As we drove up to it the barking dogs gave notice of our approach; and soon there appeared in the door-way nine faces, ranging from that of the twenty year old son to the baby girl in the arms of her ten year old sister. They all recognized the Elder, and the mother was summoned to add her welcome to that already given.

"Come right in, Elder. Henry will put up your team. You see we've gone into winter quarters; it was too cold to live in our house on the prairie."

Soon we were acquainted with all the family—a happier one we do not remember to have met.

Looking around this winter home, we noticed its construction; a hole twelve feet square had been dug into the bank; large saplings had been cut for rafters; over these, willow branches had been

thickly spread, which, by reason of the warmth from the stove, had sprouted, forming a beautiful interior finish; amid these sprigs of green the cage containing the canary had been hung; the yellow songster gave forth one of the sweetest of welcomes from his nearly bursting throat. Over the willow branches had been spread straw and sods, forming the roof. There were two apartments in this home, divided by hanging carpets; bunk-like beds were in one, where, at night, were stowed away the large family; a bedstead in the living room was the nightly resting-place of father and mother, though the former was at this time spending a few weeks in Canada.

A most delightful call was made here; and again, as is so often the case, we could not refrain from contrasting their present surroundings with former ones in the East. This home was as tidy and neat as one could find anywhere. Poverty never need be the enemy of cleanliness. It is so plain to see that luxury does not always make a happy home.

In winter it is almost impossible for this family to get to town for public worship. The missionary asked if a Sunday-school would not be a good thing

in that neighborhood? He was informed that the nearest neighbors were a mile and a half away.

"But you do not need very many more pupils than you have already in your own home, in order to have a real, live Sunday-school," he said.

"Well," said the mother, "I never thought of our having one of our own, but I think it would be a good thing; and then, when the weather is not too cold, our neighbors could come over and join us as we study the Sunday-school lesson."

The missionary was glad that his suggestion met so hearty a response, and volunteered any help in his power. The boys and girls were delighted at the thought of having a Sunday-school of their own. The thoughtful daughter of sixteen suggested their lack of necessary helps in carrying on the school; for they were poor, and could not spare the means required for Sunday-school supplies. As the missionary took from his satchel Bibles and Lesson Helps, the eyes of the children sparkled with delight. They were at once supplied with helps for that quarter, and a promise of needed help in the future.

The school was organized, and the mother elected superintendent until the father's return. After a

season of Scripture reading and prayer, we prepared for our cold drive home.

The happiness and joy brought to a frontier home by a missionary's visit, cannot be appreciated by those who have all the church privileges of city or town; and yet in many humble prairie homes are found men and women of rare culture and refinement.

The family composing the Sunday-school in the river-bank seemed sorry to have us go; but other calls, and the evening meeting, where souls were seeking Christ, made it necessary for us to hasten. A hearty God-speed was given the new school, and before spring four of the boys and girls were led to Christ.

Many more home Sunday-schools might be organized in families living where no meeting-houses or living ministers are to be found. A cheerful willingness is more than half the battle.

The ride home was more comfortable than we had expected. The Elder's home was reached a few minutes before time for evening service, which proved to be a very happy termination of the day's work.

"SNOWED IN."

SNOWED IN are words of little weight to one who has not traveled in winter, over northwestern prairies.

Having been snow-bound three weeks, and in that time unable to reach a single appointment, it was refreshing to learn that the snow blockade on the H. and D. Railway had been raised. This glad news was received Friday afternoon. Saturday morning was ushered in by a driving snow storm. A trip over the road just opened did not present any charming attractions. Two winters before, this division of the road had been locked in the grasp of the Snow King ninety days; not a wheel whirled over the iron track in all that time.

While waiting in the dreary station, the train-master was beseiged constantly by the question:

"Any train out on the H. and D.?"

"Cannot say," was his one answer.

Not till five minutes before the advertised time of leaving, did the west-bound passengers see the doleful face of the ticket agent, framed in his little square window. Armed with necessary tickets, the waiting people rapidly filled the waiting coaches. The train pulled out of the station. The snow filled the air. Lawyer, doctor, miller, merchant, and missionary, looked anxiously out of the car windows, waiting to see which would overcome—snow or steam.

Coming out on the open prairie, the winter wind whistled warningly on its way to the south; before it were carried great clouds of snow, which it deposited with wonderful rapidity in the cuts along the line. Slower and slower moved the train, and still slower, till the moaning of the snow, crushed beneath the wheels, became the stopping signal, and we stopped. Under the effective work of the thirty snow shovelers—sturdy Swedes sent out with our train—the drift disappeared.

Coming again to the open prairie, the wind blew more fiercely, rocking the train as if it were a cradle. Three hours brought us to deeper drifts and a bitter blizzard. Fortunately we were at the end of a division of the road. After an hour's delay, during

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which the storm raged most furiously, it subsided for a short time. A snow-plow, consisting of a locomotive with a huge plow attachment, was taken on; the great plow reached to the top of the "smoke-stack;" a canvas completely covered boiler, cab, and tender; as this mighty fore-runner prepared the way, it was a thrilling sight to see the great piles of snow hurled upon either side of the track. No time was lost in following the great powerful plow; for every minute added depth to newly forming drifts.

As we passed the east-bound train, encased in snow and ice, we saw what awaited us further west. Coming to a cut some thirty feet deep, filled with snow, the plow ran into it with such force as to well-nigh bury it. Our train stopped, but the storm kept right on.

In a few minutes, the snow had blown and drifted so compactly about the wheels of engine and coaches, that the train was soon locked fast in the embrace of what is sometimes called "the beautiful snow."

We were between two stations and in sight of nothing but the whiteness covering the earth; every minute added to the dreariness of the situation. Night was coming on; all were voraciously hungry;

the eatables provided by thoughtful ones had been shared.

As darkness fell upon the earth, the snow-bound passengers sought all possible comfort in the car-seats serving as beds.

Next morning, the storm had passed. The sun shone brightly upon the gloomy passengers; the shovelers were busy trying to extricate the snow-encased plow, and vigorously digging through the mass of snow filling the cut.

Some of the travelers having climbed to the summit of the hill through which the cut had been dug, discovered, a mile distant, the half-buried house of a farmer; to this they waded. Hours would be required to free the snow-bound plow and train.

When the good farmer learned of the hungry people "snowed in" a mile away, the entire family were set to work preparing food for the unfortunates. His winter provisions were heavily drawn upon. The wash-boiler was soon sending forth a savory smell like unto coffee; the bushel baskets were soon filled with eatables. The two elder sons hastened with the boiler of hot coffee, while others followed with baskets of pork sandwiches, and pails of rich,

creamy milk. This procession was a most refreshing sight to the hungry prisoners in their wintry prison. They ate and were made glad, and the kind-hearted farmer received a liberal purse.

The following afternoon the snow was removed; the plow and train reached the station; the thermometer reached *forty-five degrees below zero.* As no train could go either way for a week, the missionary remained with the little Baptist Church to aid the pastor in special meetings.

One morning during his stay, the pastor asked the missionary to make a call on a sick man. The two were soon on their way. The snow was waist-deep most of the way, and, in some places, piled over the roofs of the low houses.

The home, or hovel, of the sick one was at the farther end of the village. The weary trudge finished, we entered what remained of a door and frame. In the windows, from which many panes of glass were missing, were stuffed paper and rags, to keep out the wintry air; a broken chair and table composed the furniture, aside from the old lounge, to which attention was directed as the place where the sick lay. Beneath filthy bedclothes was the emaciated form of

an old man. As his attendant turned down the blanket, revealing a face haggard and pale, it was evident that the feeble frame could not long hold life. Stooping down, we said, as cheerfully as possible:

"Well, my friend, what can I do for you?"

A slight twitching of the eyelids was the only indication that the words were heard.

"You are soon to leave this world; have you a hope for the future?" we said, a little louder.

"I don't understand you," in deathly tones.

"You haven't much longer to stay in this world," in louder tones. "How is it with your soul?"

Again came the death-like voice:

"I don't know what you're talking about."

"The Lord Jesus is willing to save you even now, if you will but put your trust in him," we said.

Then, in lower, slower voice, the old man replied:

"I can't think of such things now; *it's too late.*"

His mind was all gone, and his intellect blunted. The missionary knew not what to do for the poor old man. He thought of prayer, but as he kneeled upon the filthy floor and began his supplications, they seemed to rise no higher than his head; he could not pray. In a few minutes, the old man passed away.

Never was the missionary placed in such a position; it was one of the saddest of his life. Inquiry among his old friends revealed the fact that this hardened sinner had often heard the invitations of the gospel, but was among the thousands who have said: "Not now; by-and-by I will settle these things pertaining to the future world."

As the missionary went to his stopping place, he met, on his way to school, a schoolboy, whose life was just beginning. Relating the sad incident of the recent visit, he asked the bright boy if his life would ever end under such heart-rending circumstances. That night the lad came to Christ, as did also one of the old companions of the man who died that day.

As the missionary thought of the two decisions—by the man of sixty years and by the youth of twelve—the question arose: How much more important is a saved life than a saved soul? During the week, some thirteen souls decided for Christ, and the little church was greatly revived.

When the blockade was raised, the missionary returned home, rejoicing that saving souls from ruin and death will always reveal the bright side of every unpleasant experience in a missionary's life.

A SHANTY PRAYER-MEETING.

WITH the Week of Prayer, a Western pastor had entered upon a series of meetings in one of the most wicked towns in Minnesota. Night after night the gospel was preached. Among those reached were four or five men in middle life. Many a night had they spent together in carousal while their families were suffering for the necessaries of life.

The Holy Spirit had convinced and convicted of sin, and each of them decided fully for Christ. When the extra meetings closed, the testing time came. Every evening after their day's work was done, they all gathered in the little chapel for Bible study and prayer, just as they had met in the saloon to walk in the ways of wickedness. These meetings were kept up all summer, and the change in the lives of these men became the town talk; their consistent lives led many of their old companions to think of their lives, and serious thoughts grew upon them week by week, as they noticed the upright lives of their

former companions; these men constantly sought to win their former comrades in sin to the better life. As the months passed, many temptations beset these Christian men on every side; but they used the way of escape which came with every temptation, and so stood fast. They learned what it was to come off more than conquerors through him that loved them, and that nothing should be able to separate them from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

The following winter's work commenced before Christmas; and they labored earnestly and prayed perseveringly for their old associates. The faithful pastor had preached seventy-nine sermons, and about fifty conversions had occurred. Among them was the ringleader of the ungodly circle; he was deeply convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit, and for many days, he could not believe that God could in anywise pardon *his* iniquities. Finally the decision was made, to cast himself on God's mercy, and rest in his promises. The true peace did not come until the eventful prayer-meeting in the shanty. He had for two years cherished bitter enmity toward one of the crowd with whom he had formerly mingled—that one having once, in a drunken row,

brutally fought with his younger brother, biting off his little finger in the encounter; he had sworn vengeance, and awaited the opportunity for its execution. When converted, he could forgive and forget all other injuries by or against whomsoever committed; but this one he could not forget.

The missionary was called to aid the pastor, who had so long conducted the meetings in which so many had taken a stand on the Lord's side. The announcement was made that an address to young men would be delivered Sunday evening; a special invitation being given to that class. Many who had not seen the inside of a meeting-house since leaving their eastern homes, came to the meeting. The Holy Spirit was present in power. The truth of God's word found lodgment in many hearts.

In the congregation was the brutal enemy of the converted ring-leader. He listened with intense interest to what was said, and remained to the after-meeting for inquirers. A more thoughtful man it would be difficult to find. Beside him sat his wife, bearing in her face the marks of his brutality; for, when under the influence of liquor, he became a fiend; his wife and five children were cruelly beaten, and

driven from their miserable home; furniture was recklessly ruined, and destruction of property made his home like the abode of a demon. The lock-up was the only place where he could be controlled. Conversing in the inquiry meeting, he said:

"I guess I'm clean down to the bottom of the hill."

His serious face emphasized the remark more than a multitude of words could have done.

Christ was presented to him as a sufficient Saviour; but he said:

"There isn't much hope for a man like me," and he hung his head in most hopeless despair.

A promise was secured that he would come the following evening. He came, and took a seat well up toward the front. Not once did he take his eyes off the speaker. When an expression was called for, he hesitated to rise; but at last rose to his feet, having determined to seek salvation through Christ.

As all the congregation kneeled by their chairs, the fumes of liquor could be easily detected; we feared that our inquirer of the previous evening had visited his favorite haunts. In the after-meeting, our fears were confirmed. He had been drinking, but not enough to rob him of his understanding, for he said:

"As I left my home this evening for my old associates' place of meeting, something seemed to say: 'Go to the meeting at the chapel;' so I turned round and came. When I entered the door, and was about to take one of the back seats, the same voice said: 'Go up further'; and I thank God I came to this meeting. I am the vilest sinner on God's earth. I beg of you, pray for my lost soul."

As we all knelt, the Holy Spirit came to the sinner in power, crushing him beneath the load of sin. His old companions prayed with him, but the burden only increased. We made an appointment to call at his home the following afternoon, to meet him and his family.

We needed not to be told that the home where we called the next day was a drunkard's; it bore unmistakable evidence of that fact. After some conversation the man and his wife asked us to pray for them, both under deep conviction for sin. It was the first prayer ever offered in that home.

Following this visit, was a children's meeting in the chapel. The two older children were present, with their father. When he rose and asked the boys and girls to pray for him, his two children wept for

joy. At the close of this meeting, he told us that, between his home and the chapel, half a dozen of his old companions had insisted upon his drinking with them, but he had said :

"No, boys; with God's help, I drink no more liquor."

We felt that this case must be followed up very closely. Owing to a County Sunday-school Convention holding its regular annual meeting, no service was held in the little chapel. Deeming it wise to have a special meeting of prayer for this man who just now needed so much help, a few of his old friends who had become Christians asked the missionary to accompany them to a neighborhood prayer-meeting at the house of the inquirer. He was very glad to have such a meeting appointed.

At half-past seven o'clock that evening, there gathered a characteristic shanty prayer-meeting.

The home contained every indication of a drunkard's place of abode. All its contents, from the wife to the broken chairs, bore marks of the terribleness of a man's actions whose brain has been set on fire of hell. The outside of the shanty was covered with tarred paper, secured in its place by laths nailed to

the upright timbers. It had but one room, in which the seven members of the household ate and slept.

Among the fifteen present to carry on that prayer-meeting, were five men who had spent many nights in drunken carousals, and wasted their all in riotous living; these had now gathered for the purpose of praying for the salvation of one who was regarded as the most wicked man in all that section of country. Among them was the one who had harbored such bitter feelings of revenge for the brutal occurrence of two years before.

After singing and the reading of Scriptures, setting forth the power of Christ to cleanse and save from sin, the company all kneeled upon the floor, which had been the scene of so much cruelty and madness.

Every prayer was directly for the family with whom the meeting was held. While each petition ascended, the man and his wife were continually crying: "God be merciful to me." "O God, have mercy upon my poor soul!" As tears mingled with cries for mercy, the Holy Spirit did his work. The wicked man then began praying for himself, and, confessing his sins in the presence of all, he cried:

"O God, I am the vilest sinner in all this world;

have mercy upon me for Christ's sake, and help me, from this time, to turn from my wicked ways and serve thee. I now give up all and trust thee to save me. God help me, for Jesus' sake."

Rising from our knees, all joined heartily in singing: "Ring the bells of heaven." The one who had sworn to avenge the injury done his brother two years before, was the first to speak.

"You all know that I have had very hard feelings toward Ed the last two years; but I can say to-night, that old grudge is all gone; and I assure him that I will stick to him like a brother; and may God help me to keep my promise!"

He then crossed the room, and took Ed by both hands, and asked his forgiveness; and together they stood looking into each other's face, as the tears streamed from their eyes. The rest of his companions assured him of their willingness to stand by him at all times; and pray for him that his faith fail not. All then testified of Christ's power to save from old appetites and sins. The wife also yielded to Christ, immediately after her husband's surrender; and, together, they pledged obedience to Christ in all things. The meeting continued till all had prayed

and witnessed to the saving power of Jesus in overcoming temptation under all circumstances.

"This is the first religious meeting I have been in for years; no one has ever known that I once loved and served the Lord Jesus. To-night I have been cornered, and I wonder why the Lord should send you way out in these woods, and into this shanty, to make me see what a wicked wanderer I have been. I want you to pray for me and my family."

Opening his Bible, the missionary read: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

"I will arise and go to my father," the prodigal responded; and so another wanderer returned for his welcome.

As the meeting broke up, Ed said:

"I thank God for this night; I cannot tell the joy that has come into my soul. Pray for me; and whenever any more neighborhood prayer-meetings are held, remember my shanty is always at your service."

A WINTER EXPERIENCE.

WHAT say you to a missionary trip over the prairies, and into the woods of Minnesota? The spirit in the thermometer is playing in the neighborhood of *thirty degrees below zero.* After a morning's ride over the Manitoba Railway, we are met at the little railroad station of A. by good Deacon B. The span of four-year-old colts are wild to be off on the winter road, over the prairie; the deacon holds the restless animals with a firm grasp, akin to that with which he clings to his Baptist faith; the cutter is so full of robes and blankets that we wonder where ourselves and satchels can be stowed; the arrowy wind with its keen barbs warns us to enter the little station-shanty for shelter; the deacon shouts to us from his furry nest:

"Put on your wraps in double-quick time and in double-thick folds; the air is quite fresh this afternoon."

We pull our fur-cap down over our ears and fore-

head—the latter the mark at which Jack Frost aims his most fatal arrows—we button our buffalo-coat clear down to our ankles; and with thick boots over two pair of woolen socks, outside of which are heavy overshoes, we finish our winter toilet by drawing on our beaver mittens.

"You must pardon this cold reception," cheerily chirps the deacon from his nest; "but the colts wouldn't stand long in this wind without a man holding the lines. Pull up that collar, my brother, if you don't want to stop at the first house to thaw out your cheeks."

We instantly comply with the good man's request. In some mysterious way, the great pile of robes covering the deacon, opens, our satchels are pushed under the seat, and we occupy the deacon's comfortable cutter.

Away fly the span of colts, and we at once detect pride in horse-flesh as the deacon's besetting sin—a most comfortable one, by the way, when we anticipate our prairie drive of eight miles before stopping. Our conversation is carried on in an old style Methodist way, the merry chime of bells upon each of the colts making it necessary.

"See that house?" shouted the deacon. We exercise our lungs affirmatively.

"Well," the good man informs us, "the man who lives there has not been inside of a church for more than fifty years; and, what's more, we can't get him out to meeting."

Notwithstanding our warm wrappings, the Minnesota air has gotten its teeth into various parts of our physical make-up during our ride of four miles; so we propose a little missionary work with this long standing absentee from gospel privileges. The deacon thinks it will be "a waste of words," but says:

"I guess it is warmer inside; so we'll go."

Driving up to the barn, we discover the hardened non-church-goer chopping wood; he leaves the axe in one end of the log, and comes to welcome us to his home. We warm our cold bodies by the kitchen, parlor, and sitting-room stove combined, while our host chats about this being "the coldest winter since '57." He is one of those eastern men who has come to the Northwest for the sole purpose of making money, and has accomplished his mission; his wealth is his god, which has starved his soul.

We kindly suggest reading a few verses from God's

word, and engaging in prayer; consent is given. What mean those anxious eyes turned toward the reader? All that this world gives, fails to satisfy the longings of one so hardened by sin. We kneel to ask the Lord to visit this home, "to seek and save the lost." Not being a minister, we venture a bit of our experience when, as a business man, the Lord's word, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?" came to us, and "set our affections on things above." We notice tears in the poor man's eyes as he looks into ours; and we pray God's Spirit to abide with him; we invite Satan's rich man to the gospel meetings that we are to hold in the recently dedicated Baptist meeting house, and leave with him several gospel tracts to preach silent sermons, if he fails to accept our invitation.

The wind is even keener than when we entered the house; but four miles yet remain before we reach the deacon's home. What a sweep the wind has over these prairies! The snow drifts, so that the road is lost; two great sun-dogs are following the fast setting sun; the colts seem to anticipate the farther falling of the thermometer, and hasten still more their now

almost flying speed. Just at nightfall, we see a light in the window for the deacon; and right rejoiced are we at the prospect of so soon being under shelter. With frosted hands and feet, we leave the cutter, to receive a cordial welcome from the deacon's wife, who administers to us such remedies as shall again start the circulation of our chilled blood.

The deacon's is one of the few really comfortable homes the missionary finds on the frontier, and where he feels that "the lines are fallen to him in a pleasant place."

Elder W. calls in just after our delicious cup of tea has disappeared. He has stood northern winters for many years, and asks our opinion of this weather. We answer in the monosyllable, "COLD." It is our first winter in Minnesota. The Elder looks at us curiously, and wonders how the Society came to appoint such a man as missionary in such a climate, and secretly resolves to try the stuff of which we are made, and says:

"To-morrow morning we'll make a few calls, if you are willing."

We express our willingness.

The Elder gone, the deacon's eldest daughter takes

from the bookcase Bibles and hymn books for all the family, and we join in their evening worship. We retire with a heart thankful that some places out on the frontier are little Edens to the missionary.

In the morning, after breakfast, Henry, the deacon's first-born, reports: "The coldest of the season—*thirty-eight degrees below zero.*"

"Will the Elder want to make those calls?" we silently ask ourselves. Of course he will; and by eight o'clock, he is at the deacon's *afoot* to take us out for several morning calls.

Owing to God's goodness, we are the possessors of a fur outfit; and in this we soon hide ourselves, only our eyes being visible.

"All ready, Elder," we report; and out into the cold world we go.

"The first place," the preacher informs us, "is about a mile and a half up the road."

Being so securely sheltered, we rather enjoy the bracing air, and trudge along by the Elder's side, while the only sounds to be heard are our footsteps on the crisp snow.

"This *is* a stinger, and no mistake," remarks the preacher; adding, "perhaps it's *too cold for you?*"

"Oh, no, Elder," we reply, cheerfully; "very comfortable indeed this morning."

On we go, the Elder clapping his hands together to warm them every now and then. Arriving at our destination, we remove our wraps—the preacher not daring to get too near the stove to thaw out his left ear and also his fingers. We remove our cap and throw open our buffalo coat, to find our body all aglow as if it were June instead of January.

We find here a poor family, nearly all sick, and scarcely able to be about. On the bed is an old gray-haired man, suffering with heart disease; he is a skeptic, and is known as such throughout the neighborhood—"almost a hopeless case," the Elder has told us. We suggest singing and prayer; the family are willing; we sing one of the gospel hymns, and tears come into the skeptic's eyes; he is too weak to speak, but motions us to go on. We sing another verse and kneel in prayer, and as we leave, say to him:

"If we do not see each other again on earth, may we meet in that better land." He whispered, with tears filling his eyes, "Oh, yes!"

"This visit has not been in vain," the Elder says, as we leave the door; "the old gentleman has never

before shown that anything of a spiritual character ever touched his heart."

"Then, Elder," we say, "this is not such a hopeless case, after all."

Out into the winter again, the good man says:

"It is almost too cold to make any more calls to-day. We'll go home."

We gently remark that we are not suffering from the cold; and he says he don't know when the cold has taken hold of *him* as it has this morning. We go home.

This evening we hold a gospel meeting in the church. The weather has moderated a little; and before half-past seven the little church is filled with people, some having come as far as six miles to hear the gospel; some of them walking the distance. The field is ripe for the harvest. While "The old, old st ry" is told and sung, one and another among the audience are seen with tearful eyes. The Holy Spirit is moving upon their hearts. We ask:

"Are there any here to-night who realize that they are lost souls out of Christ? If so, are you willing to stand on your feet one moment, to let us know that you want to be saved?"

All over the church are men, women, and children, rising. We close the meeting, inviting all who desire, to remain to the inquiry meeting. A dozen souls decide for Christ before leaving the house. As we go out of the door, a rough-looking, but very tender-hearted farmer, who loves the Lord Jesus, says to us:

"I wish you would come out to my place. I live in a little log shanty that is hardly worth calling a house; but I have some children whose souls are not saved; and they might be reached by your singing some of those gospel songs."

We tell him to look for us to-morrow afternoon. As the time draws near the Elder calls in his sleigh; after a cold drive for several miles over the prairie, we near a little hut almost hid beneath the sods with which it is banked; the only place for light to enter is a window where only one or two panes of glass are visible. We enter and find one of poverty's homes; there is but one room in the house; four beds are in the four corners, where at night sleep the father, mother, and seven children—the oldest boy fifteen, and the youngest a babe, not two months old. We talk of what Jesus has done for lost sinners, in this

home, and the children's hearts are reached by the simple story of the gospel. We leave some copies of *Our Little Ones* for the smaller children; and smiles spread over the little faces as this gem of a paper gladdens their hearts. One bright little fellow has learned his letters almost entirely from the manufacturers' names on the kitchen stove which warms the house, and is quite proud to be able to point out for us the letters J E S U S, and is glad to have us tell him that Jesus loves him. We leave a number of happy hearts in this humble home.

When we are comfortably settled under the buffalo robes, the Elder says:

"Isn't that one of the most poverty stricken homes you have ever seen?"

We remark that we have seen poorer ones, because in some we have visited there has not been a single Christian in the family. But so far as this world's goods are concerned, we must admit to the Elder that a very poor man lives in the hut we have just left.

"Well," says the Elder, "let me tell you a little about this poor man. When we began building our meeting-house, no one thought this man could help us at all; but, one day, he called on Deacon B., and

said he must help all he could, and put his name down for *one hundred dollars*. The deacon thought the poor man had lost his senses, until he said:

"'Yes, deacon, it is the Lord's house, and I must give to him, if I come to the poor-house; but I know I shall not. I can sell ten of my twenty acres of timber land for a hundred dollars, and I'll give it to the Lord.'

"The deacon immediately increased his subscription to the building fund, when this example of self-sacrifice came to his notice."

We can only say to the Elder, "He that soweth sparingly shall also reap sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall also reap bountifully."

"In that house," says the Elder, pointing to a frame shanty covered with tarred paper, "lives old Bill H., the wickedest man in the county. He was at meeting last night, and sat in the back seat. Nobody in this neighborhood has anything to do with him; not even the ministers who work in this county."

"We'll go and call on him a few minutes," we say to the Elder.

"We haven't time now," says the preacher.

"Yes, we have all the time there is."

The door opens to our knock. Such a picture as greets our eyes! In a cradle, made of a soap box, is a little one, not a year old, with the whooping cough; the mother, with an infant at her breast, rocks the cradle. She is the living picture of despair, all worn and tired from watching with her sick ones. Two boys in the corner are suffering with the mumps, while another is helpless from rheumatism.

The keen winter air comes whistling into the house, while the father replenishes the fire with green wood, and all suffer with cold until the fuel has had time to take fire. Twisted newspaper has been used to stop the cracks, through which the cold comes so keenly. Brown wrapping paper curtains the window, which admits the light to this wretched home.

We distribute pictures and cards to the numerous little folks, and suggest to the father and mother a season of singing and prayer. Why do the tears start into the eyes of this father and mother as we sing:

There is a fountain filled with blood.

We tell of God's wonderful love to guilty and lost sinners, and kneel to pray in a home where prayer

has never been offered before. How heartily this "wickedest man" and his wife thank us for this call, and promise to turn unto the Lord, and seek forgiveness now! The Elder is very silent the rest of the way home.

"This afternoon we'll go over to Oak Grove Sunday-school," says the Elder, on Sunday morning.

His school meets in the morning, and resolves this year to use only Baptist literature; a collection is taken for the Society's missionary work, and though small in amount, it is cheerfully given. We address the school upon some point in the lesson which will direct their thoughts toward Christ as their Saviour.

At one o'clock we start for the frontier Sunday-school in the woods—a four-mile drive over the bleak prairie. The thermometer *thirty-five degrees below zero,* and the wind blowing a gale, are indicative of the "weather probabilities." At the end of two miles, the Elder thinks we ought not to have started, and suggests turning back; but we unwisely suggest that since we have started, let's go through. The sun is closely watched by two great sun-dogs, and we run very great risk to go in the face of their warning. But we believe the real reason the Elder suggested

this trip, is to "try what stuff we are made of," and we are slightly proud to show him.

We reach the little log school-house in the friendly shelter of the woods, to find the faithful superintendent and seven pupils awaiting us. We hold a short gospel service and start for home, as the Elder says:

"We *must* get home before night overtakes us, or we shall perish on the prairie."

There is a deep earnestness about the way in which he speaks that gives us a most uncomfortable feeling.

Leaving the woods we find the wind full in our faces, and so bitter cold that the water running from our eyes freezes upon our cheeks. The snow has drifted; the road is hid; night is coming on; we urge our tired little pony forward; we cannot keep the road, but the Elder cheerfully announces that "he knows every foot of the ground." We drive over fences and fields; the sun sinks into a dark cloud-bank; darkness approaches. We hurry our pony; the dark cloud in the southwest comes rapidly toward us; as we come in sight of the Elder's house, the blizzard catches us. We cannot see six feet before us, the snow is so blinding; we are almost frozen; the Elder holds a tight line over his faithful pony;

suddenly the animal stops. We leave the sleigh to find that we are at the Elder's back-door. The storm increases in fury; the thermometer sinks to *forty degrees below zero;* the pony is sheltered and fed; while we are comfortably cared for by the Elder's family, who feared we had perished on the prairie. We thank God that we are again safely sheltered from the Minnesota blizzard.

THE END.